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EVERYTHING'S OUT OF WHACK, COMPLETELY OFF KILTER. EVIL BLACKHEAD ARMIES ERUPT WITHOUT WARNING, TAKE ME AS HOSTAGE, DIE, BECAUSE I HAVE A SECRET WEAPON WHICH IS MIGHTIER THAN YOU. THEN LAUGH EVEN HARDER AND MULTIPLY, WELL DIE, YOU ZOMBIE ZIT INVADERS, DIE, YOU WHICH CLEANS WAY DOWN DEEP WITH YOU INTO THE NEXT GALAXY FOR KILLER STUFF THAN THE NUMBER ONE PAD TO BLAST AND WHICH IN FACT IS THIS WICKED LITTLE PAD FROM CLEARASIL®

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Advertising Director
Craig Cassanelli

Sales Assistant
Lisa Fox

757 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017
(212) 593-2228

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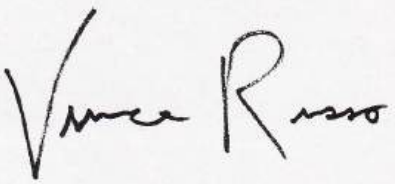
A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

In my estimation, there is no World Wrestling Federation superstar who better exemplifies the New Generation than the Heartbreak Kid Shawn Michaels. Whereas others have claimed to be the "total package," Michaels IS the premier sports-entertainer of the '90s! From his dynamic style and classic grace to his aggressive attitude and breathtaking athletic ability, the Heartbreak Kid showcases a complete repertoire that, in my opinion, clearly places him light years ahead of the rest. You may think he's cute, you may know he's sexy, but many gyrations from now when it's check-out time at the Heartbreak Hotel, you can be assured that he may have been the BEST who ever played the game!

Without further ado, it gives me great pleasure to bring to you—his fans—this special *Wrestling Spotlight* on the Heartbreak Kid Shawn Michaels: perhaps the greatest sports-entertainer on God's green earth!



Vince Russo
Editor

Bruising Bones and Breaking Hearts:

He's been called everything from "an arrogant punk" to "the sexiest man alive" to "the best wrestler to never win the Federation Title."

The Shawn Michaels Story

Regardless of the content of the comments, the Heartbreak Kid Shawn Michaels always has the fans, the wrestlers and the media talking. In the last decade, the fair-haired boy from San Antonio, Texas, has gone from being the consummate tag team specialist to the brash host of an interview segment appropriately called *The Heartbreak Hotel* to a classic athlete arguably headed for the World Wrestling Federation Hall of Fame.

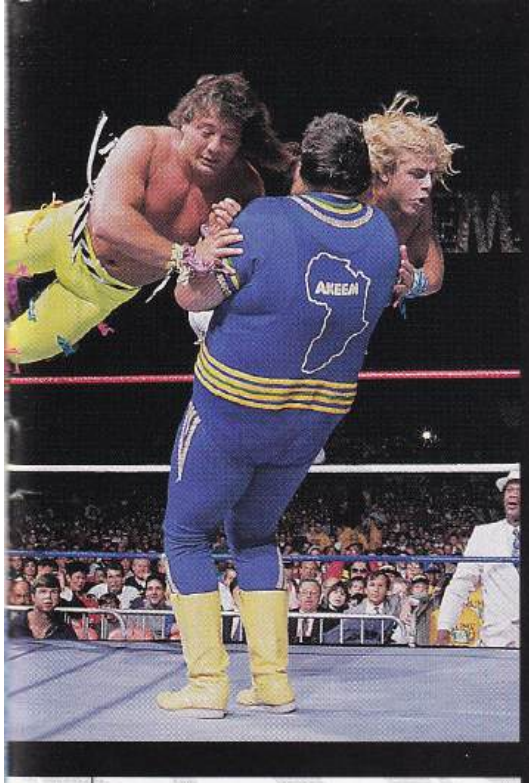
He's done it with skill, he's done it with style and he's done it with attitude. Most of all, the current World Wrestling Federation Intercontinental Champion has done it his way.

Michaels entered the World Wrestling Federation in 1988 prepared to rule it. At his side was Marty Jannetty, his multi-talented tag team partner. The pair had achieved a level of fame in the now-defunct American Wrestling Association (AWA), but each viewed the World Wrestling Federation as his graduation to the major leagues.

Officially, the team was called the Rockers—due to the partners' long hair, fringed outfits and free-wheeling ring arsenal—but the experts swiftly tagged them the "masters of motion."

Michaels and Jannetty spent as much time in the air as they did on the ground, overwhelming such celebrated combinations as the Brain Busters (Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson), Jacques and Raymond Rougeau, the Orient Express (Tanaka and Sato) and Power and Glory (Paul Roma and Hercules).

Oddly, Shawn seemed to relish his matches against larger competition—revealing a side of his personality not well known to the wrestling public. "He thinks of himself as a giant killer," says a friend. "Just look at the pleasure he gets taking on a monster like Sid or even a chiseled bruiser like Razor Ramon. Shawn always knew he wasn't the biggest guy in the game, but when he takes out these behemoths, you



have to wonder whether he's the toughest."

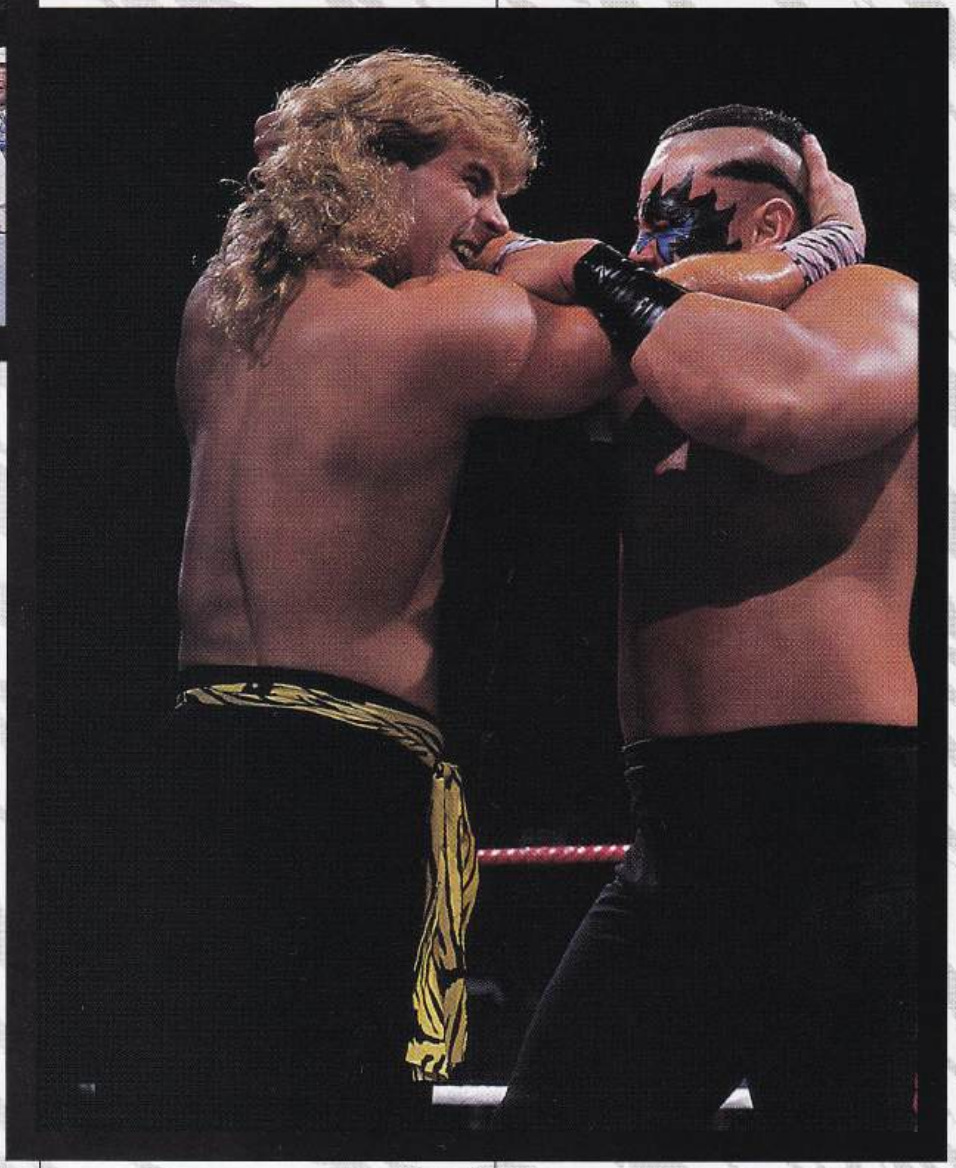
At *WrestleMania V* in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the Rockers were pitted against the huge Twin Towers, Akeem and the Big Boss Man. Fans were stunned when the high fliers—barely out of their rookie year in the Federation—shocked their opponents with double dropkicks and double fists from the top rope. Although Shawn eventually lost the match for his team—when Boss Man punished him with a spike slam and Akeem followed through with a big splash—it was clear that this youngster wasn't afraid of anybody in the sport of kings.

Against the massive Powers of Pain—the Warlord and Barbarian—the Rockers were forced to put on a clinic in tag team excellence. Unable to match the brutal Barbarian in strength, Shawn ran the ropes, then soared forward with a try at a flying bodypress. Barbarian—who years later would return to the mat wars under his real name, Seone—snatched him out of the air and attempted a bodyslam. However, Jannetty quickly dived off the ropes onto Michaels' back, driving the Barbarian to the mat for a near-fall.

Later, when Michaels attempted a sunset flip on the dangerous Warlord, the big man strained to remain upright, fighting the Rocker's efforts to fully execute the move. As the Warlord was focused on Shawn, Jannetty came to his teammate's aid—with a high cross-bodyblock leveled at the colossus.

This would have certainly been a Rocker victory were it not for the interference of Powers of Pain manager Mr. Fuji in the final seconds of the clash. Indeed, the Rockers—who'd rejected several overtures by advisers to take them on—often found themselves cheated by intruding managers. As time passed and Shawn and Marty were repeatedly frustrated in their struggle to secure the Federation Tag Team Title, the partners began to argue. Michaels suggested acquiring a manager's services. Jannetty resisted, believing that the team was good enough to remain independent.

Shawn accepted Jannetty's reasoning, but he was beginning to get disillusioned. Privately, Michaels felt that his partner wasn't as concerned about win-



ning the belts as he should have been. And many writers were declaring that Shawn was the more gifted of the two. Perhaps, they said, his alliance with Jannetty was holding him back.

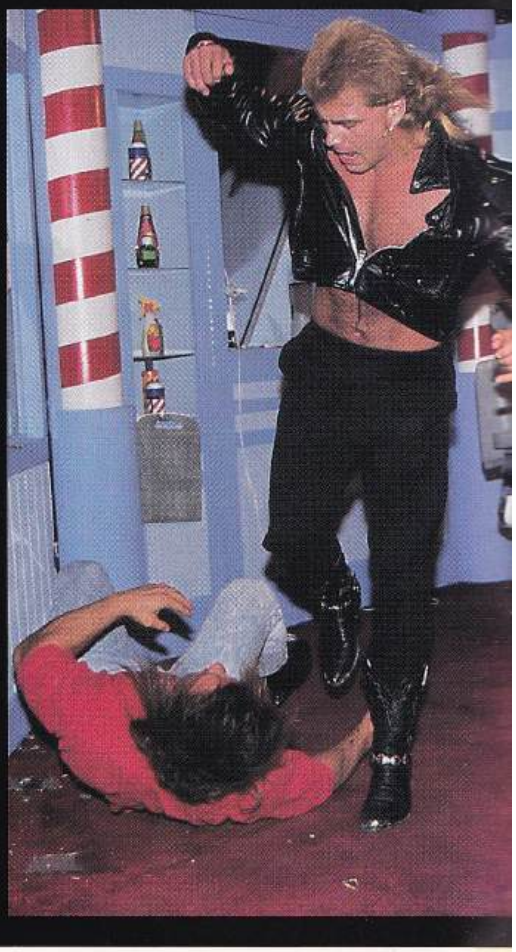
The tension showed itself on the apron, glided through the air and blasted Sags with a clothesline.

Now Jannetty stepped into the action, but he only aggravated the situation. As he lifted Sags for a bodyslam, the victim's feet

agreement. Then, as Jannetty turned away from his partner, relieved, Michaels delivered a thrust kick out of nowhere, sending Marty crashing through the window of the set.

With that defiant gesture, Shawn Michaels reinvented himself. No longer would he be the Rocker. Forever more, he'd be the Heartbreak Kid. He did something Jannetty had always refused to do: hire a manager. The adviser was a person well-suited for Michaels' emerging ego: She was Sensational Sherri, a woman who gushed over her charge and serenaded him with the words to his recently penned theme song, *Sexy Boy*.

The new Shawn Michaels would then achieve the success



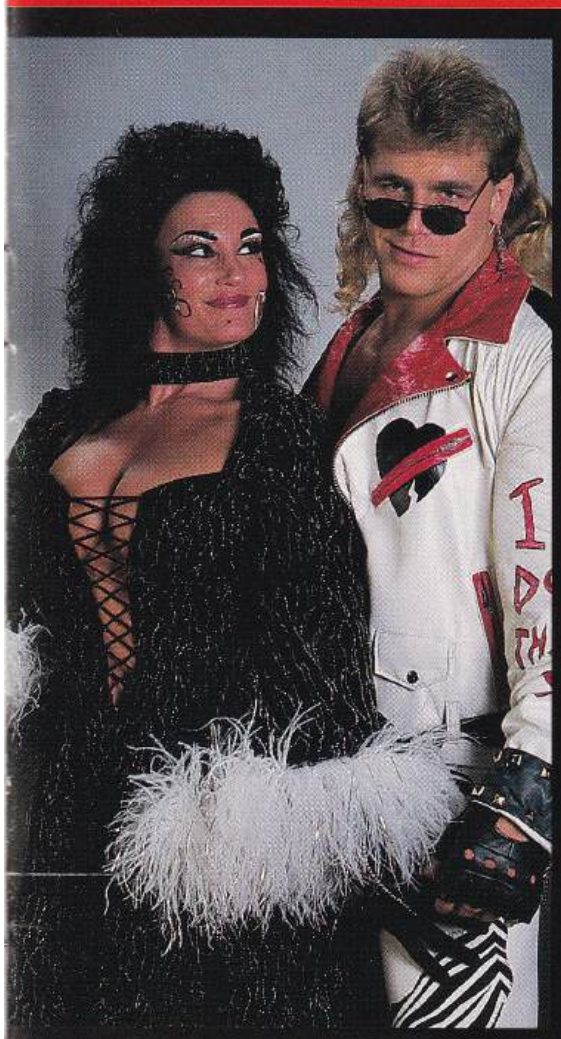
when the Rockers teamed up with the Bushwhackers against the Beverly Brothers and the Nasty Boys in the 1991 *Survivor Series*. Michaels took a pounding in the match but would not tag out to Jannetty when the opportunity presented itself. Instead, Shawn seemed committed to gaining the upper hand without anybody's assistance—an outlook counter to the spirit of tag team wrestling.

Impressively, Michaels established himself as a creative, defensive wrestler. When Nasty Boy Sags tossed him over the ropes, Shawn somehow managed to land on his feet on the ring apron. Returning to the ring, he dropkicked his adversary to the arena floor, perched himself

accidentally struck Michaels, knocking him to the mat, where he was pinned—and eliminated from the battle—by the other Nasty Boy, Knobbs.

Shawn couldn't contain his rage. As the other wrestlers just stood around and watched, the Rockers exchanged angry words in the center of the ring. At one point, Shawn even shoved his longtime friend. Before the circumstances could worsen, though, Michaels stomped off to the dressing room, alone.

The two attempted to discuss their differences on *The Barber Shop*, an interview segment then hosted by wrestler Brutus "The Barber" Beefcake. They were testy at first but soon seemed on the road to resolving their dis-



the old one was always chasing. In 1992 he challenged the mighty British Bulldog for the Intercontinental Title. The Bulldog had defeated Bret "Hit Man" Hart for the belt in front of a wild hometown crowd at London's Wembley Stadium. His popularity was at its peak. As formidable an opponent as Michaels was, he was still considered a tag team wrestler attempting to make the transition to singles competition. Few expected him to win.

The Bulldog dominated the early stages of the match with power. At one stage, when Shawn had his opponent on the canvas in an arm scissors, the stout Britisher lifted up Michaels with one arm and hurled him across the ring.

Nevertheless, Michaels hung in. He noticed that the Bulldog had hurt his back while executing the fancy move and took advantage of the injury. He removed the turnbuckle from the ring post and waited for a moment to use the exposed steel against the champion. The opportunity came late in the contest, just after Shawn survived a suplex. The Heartbreak Kid reversed an Irish whip, sending Bulldog into the buckle. Bulldog fought back, but Michaels' mind was constantly ticking, waiting for the next opening. As the titlist positioned him on the top turnbuckle for a superplex, Shawn thought quickly, then shifted his weight, coming down on top of the Bulldog to win the match and the Intercontinental Belt.

Shawn the giant killer had

Impressively, Michaels established himself as a creative, defensive wrestler.

just slain his most significant mammoth.

Shortly after the victory, he was chosen as the challenger for the main event at the *Survivor Series*. His opponent: World Wrestling Federation Champion Bret "Hit Man" Hart. Earlier in the year when Bret was the holder of the Intercontinental Title, the two had met in a unique ladder match—battling their way up a ladder, where the belt hung suspended from the ceiling. Hit Man had come out on top in that contest, but Shawn was convinced that he had learned enough about the champion to wrest away his belt at the *Survivor Series*.

While Bret was rated the more powerful of the two, Michaels was the superior tactician. Throughout the match, he constantly used Hit Man's momentum against him. In the opening minutes of the main event, the champion flung himself at Michaels, who caught him in midair and tossed him into the ropes. There, Bret hung, dangling with his head caught between the strands. A short time later, Hart tried charging again. This time, Michaels stepped out of the way, and the titlist ended up wedged between the ringpost and the steps. Much later in the bout, Bret tied up his adversary in the ropes, but when the Hit Man rushed forward, the challenger again slipped to safety—forcing the World Wrestling Federation kingpin to stampede into the strands.

As the action heated up, though, Hit Man figured out Michaels' strategy and ultimately used it to gain a victory. As the contest was drawing to a close, Shawn climbed to the second rope and surged forward with a dropkick attempt. Hart snared his foe by the feet in midair, twisted him around and locked him in the Sharpshooter. Shawn had no choice but to submit.

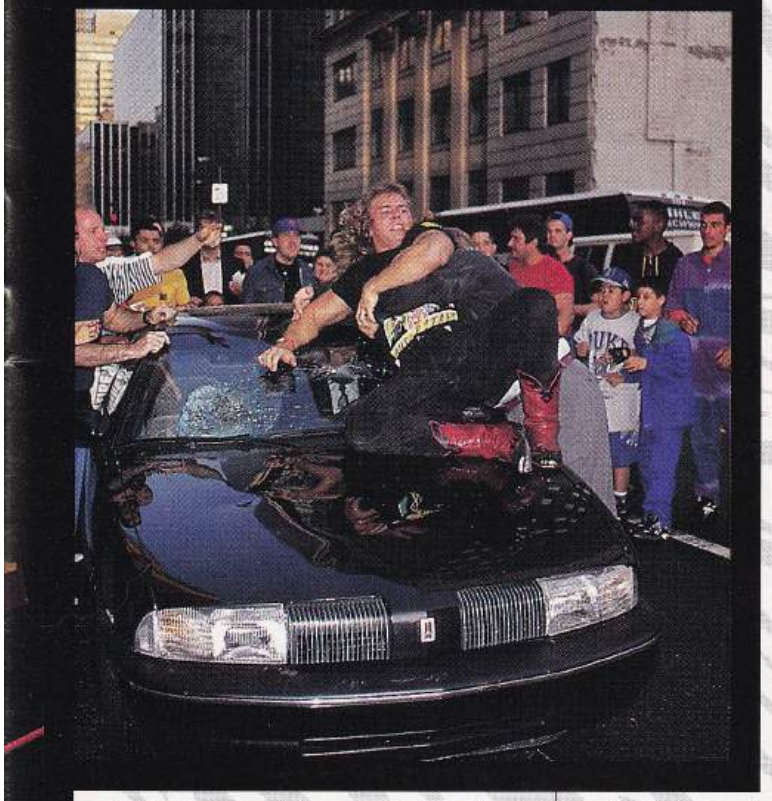
After the match, Michaels would tell associates that he'd learned a lot from Bret Hart—a man the Heartbreak Kid now credits with inspiring him to become a better wrestler.

However, Shawn always had a problem keeping friends. Many of his associates believe this had to do with his relationship with Jannetty. "Toward the end of the Rocker era, Shawn felt so stifled that when anybody got too close, he lashed out," claims a former sparring partner.

By the time he faced his old friend Jannetty at the 1993 *Royal Rumble*, Michaels had had a falling out with Sherri. The manager was still infatuated with Shawn, though. Even when she attacked him, she appeared clumsy and confused. As victory was slipping from Jannetty's hands, Sherri entered the ring, swinging a shoe at her "Sexy Boy." Shawn ducked and Marty took the blow. As Jannetty staggered to his feet, Michaels nailed him with a reverse kick and logged another triumph.

For his *WrestleMania IX* Intercontinental Title defense against Tatanka, Shawn brought along uncontrollable Luna Vachon to balance out the presence of Sherri in the contender's corner. This was a chaotic affair from the start. Michaels and Tatanka spent more time fighting outside the ring than they did wrestling inside the squared circle. As the referee started to count out the gladiators, Shawn reached through the ropes and pulled the official to the arena floor.

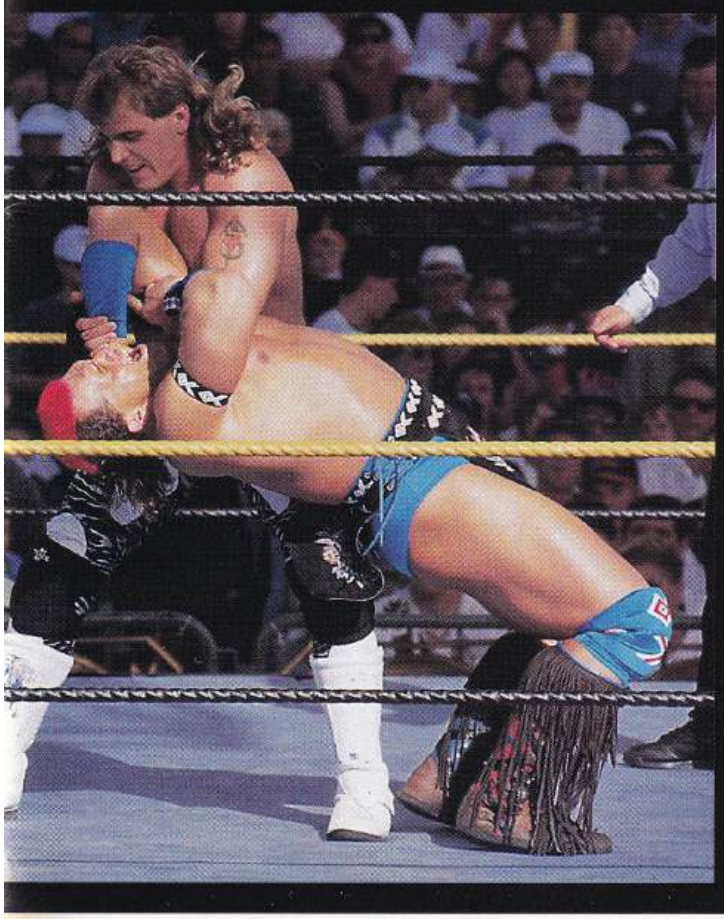
The Intercontinental titlist was immediately disqualified, but by then the fans were focused on other things. Not far from the male grapplers, Luna clotheslined, bodyslammed and kicked



Sherri, then went into the dressing room area and jumped Shawn's former manager at a first aid station. Michaels would cause his own sensation later in the night when he assaulted Mr. Perfect backstage following his match with Lex Luger.

"Once again, the Heartbreak Kid is making waves," Shawn would boast to some reporters after *WrestleMania IX*.

Always the specter of Marty Jannetty was there. On May 17, 1993, Marty walked off the streets of New York City and into the Manhattan Center to demand a title shot with Shawn during a live telecast of *Monday Night Raw*. Michaels reluctantly agreed, but the titlist was obviously ill-prepared for the surprise. Midway through the match, he picked up his belt and bolted toward the dressing room, but Mr. Perfect—still extremely bitter over the *WrestleMania IX* mugging—blocked the champion's departure.



Michaels was herded back to the ring. There, he flattened Jannetty with a vicious side-kick, but Shawn was too flustered to buckle down and pin his ex-teammate. Instead he turned to Mr. Perfect at ringside. Perfect tossed his towel at Michaels. As Shawn let out a flurry of insults, Jannetty snuck up behind him, tied him up in a small package and gained possession of the Intercontinental Belt.

Not for long, however. Twenty-one days later, Shawn showed up for a rematch in Albany, New York, with a master plan. At his side was a goateed individual new to the World Wrestling Federation. Thanks to the assistance of his brand-new bodyguard—7-foot-tall Diesel—the Heartbreak Kid regained the Intercontinental Title.

With Diesel backing up Shawn, Jannetty's chances of reversing the tide were eliminated. The two former Rockers had one of their last matches in a cage in White Plains, New York, on August 17, 1993. There, when Jannetty scaled the bars of the pen, he was met at the top by the bodyguard. As the duo duked it out, Shawn—who'd been disabled a short time earlier when Marty tossed him across the ring from the top of the cage—crawled out the door. Despite Diesel's interference, Shawn

was declared the victor. For all intents and purposes, the Rocker feud was over.

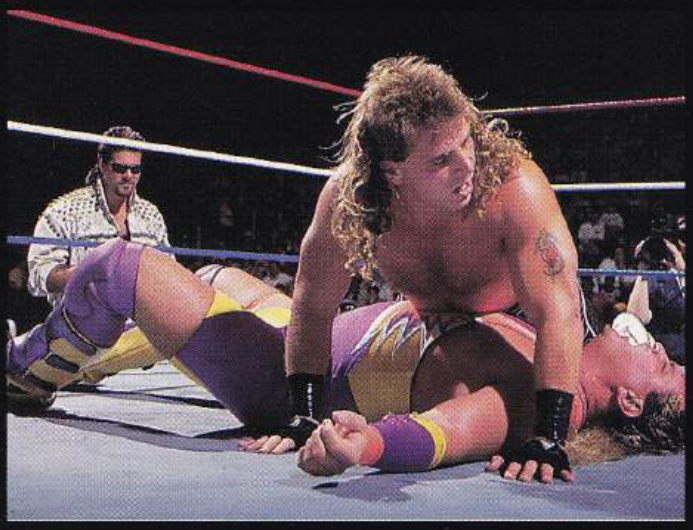
Shawn's name was at the top of the marquee in the World Wrestling Federation. At the 1993 *King of the Ring* tournament, he successfully defended the belt against Crush when Doink the Clown—Michaels' ally at the time—helped distract the challenger, allowing Shawn to pin him from behind. At that year's *SummerSlam*, Michaels gained revenge against Mr. Perfect when Diesel pulled the contender out of the ring as he was cruising toward victory, resulting in a count-out win for the Intercontinental champ. The following fall, at the *Survivor Series*, Michaels led a team against the Hart Brothers—Bret, Owen, Bruce and Keith—stirring up dissension within their ranks. With Shawn instigating, Bret and Owen would argue bitterly in this match, and later they would feud.

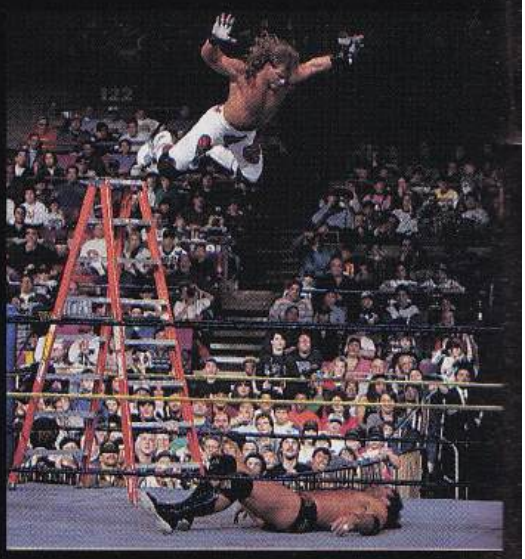
In fact, Shawn was on such a tear, his supporters contend, that the World Wrestling Federation hierarchy was worried. They feared an endless reign by a man who refused to play by their rules. Michaels never lost the Intercontinental Title. He was instead stripped of it by World Wrestling Federation President Jack Tunney for not defending the belt while he was on an extended vacation.

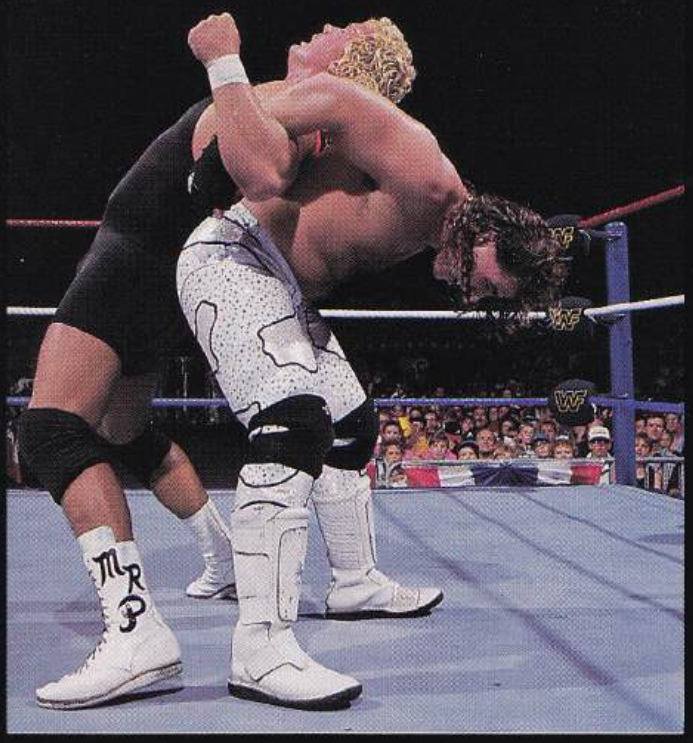
Tunney declared a tournament to crown a new titlist. When Razor Ramon took the belt, Shawn reappeared, still wearing his old belt. Tunney's action amounted to nothing more than a conspiracy, Michaels insisted. At *WrestleMania X*, he pledged to vanquish Ramon and once again assume a role at the head of the Federation.

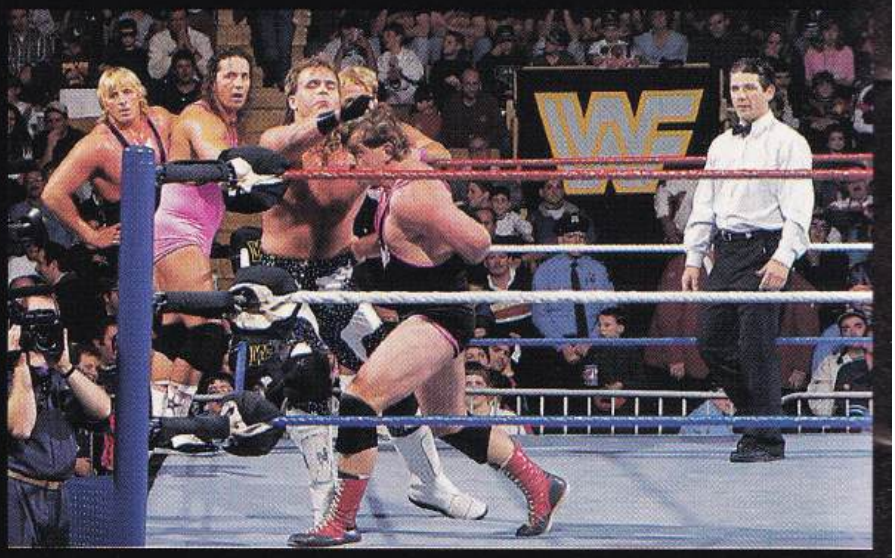
Their ladder match at wrestling's superbowl was one of the all-time great confrontations, as brutal as it was artistic (see related article in this issue), but without the assistance of Diesel—who was banished from ringside—Michaels failed to snag the title. The Heartbreak Kid now faced a new crisis in his career. Could he win it all if Big Daddy Cool stayed at home?

At this point, Shawn and Diesel were so intertwined that fans rarely saw one without the other. Unable to defeat Ramon himself, Shawn played an instru-









mental role when Diesel managed to do it. Then on August 28, 1994, the pair won the Tag Team Championship from the Head Shrinkers.

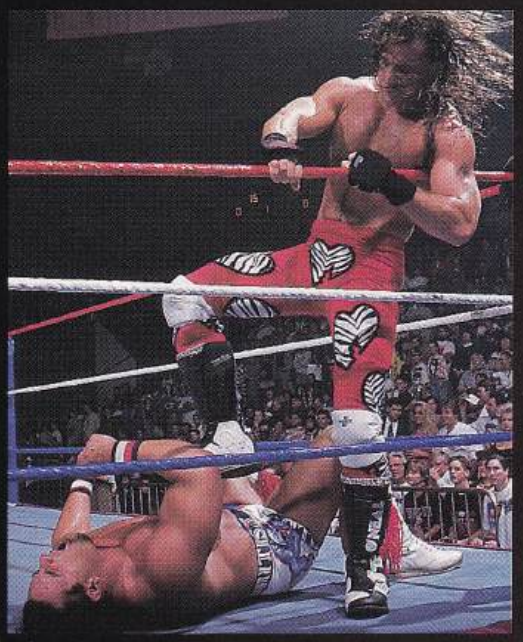
The next night at *SummerSlam*, Shawn was in his bodyguard's corner when he squared off against Ramon in an Intercontinental Title rematch. This time, the partnership showed signs of stress. Fearing foul play, Razor was accompanied by National Football League legend Walter Payton. With Payton's encouragement, the self-proclaimed "Bad Guy" from the streets of Havana, Cuba, was at his best. At the close of the match, when Diesel held Ramon for a Shawn Michaels thrust kick, Razor moved. Diesel got blasted, lost the belt and was soon wondering whether his relationship with Michaels was a benefit or a hindrance.

The question was answered at the next *Survivor Series* when Shawn and Diesel linked up with Jim Neidhart, Owen Hart and Jeff Jarrett against the combination of Ramon, the British Bulldog, 1-2-3 Kid and the Head Shrinkers. After his partners were eliminated, Ramon was grabbed by Diesel and held for a Michaels' kick. Once again, Razor moved, and Diesel took the blow.

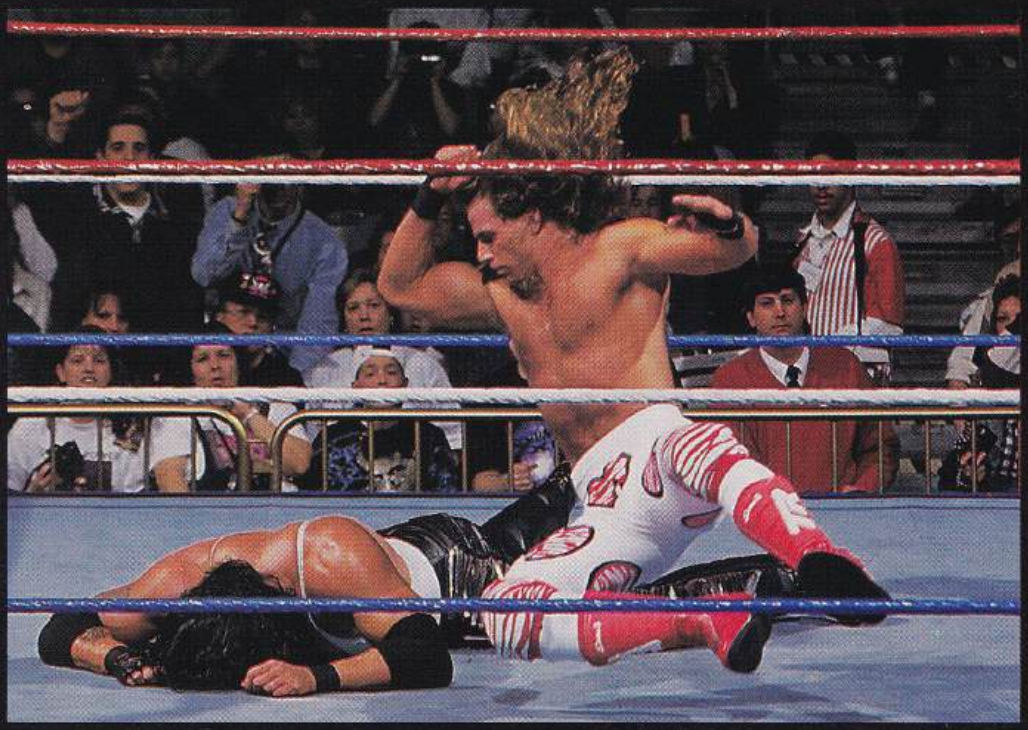
This time, Shawn and Diesel were through. So final was their parting that they willfully forfeited the Tag Team Championship Belts. If the pair was going to get together in the ring again, it would only be as opponents.

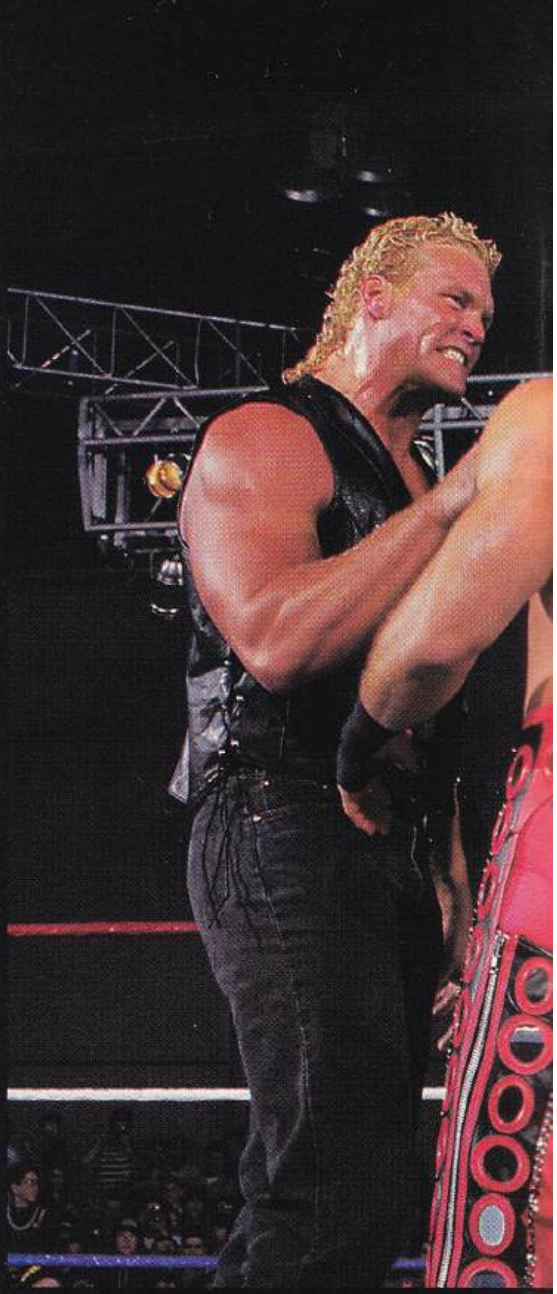
On November 26, 1994, Diesel shocked the wrestling world by defeating World Wrestling Federation Champion Bob Backlund in eight seconds in New York's Madison Square Garden. Shortly thereafter, Tunney announced that the winner of the upcoming 30-man *Royal Rumble* would get a crack at the champ at *WrestleMania XI*.

Michaels wanted this victory more than anybody else, and he boldly fought his way through 29 opponents to get it. He was the first man in the ring and for the duration of the match weathered poundings by Crush, Lex Luger and the British Bulldog, but he always rebounded back. After the other wrestlers had been eliminated, Bulldog charged at



Michaels, propelling him over the top rope. As the Heartbreak Kid plummeted toward the arena floor, he relied on his heralded quick thinking, grabbing the top strand and muscling himself back into the squared circle. Unaware of Shawn's actions, an excited Bulldog turned to the crowd, convinced that he had won. Then Michaels erupted on him from the rear, eliminating him from the fray.





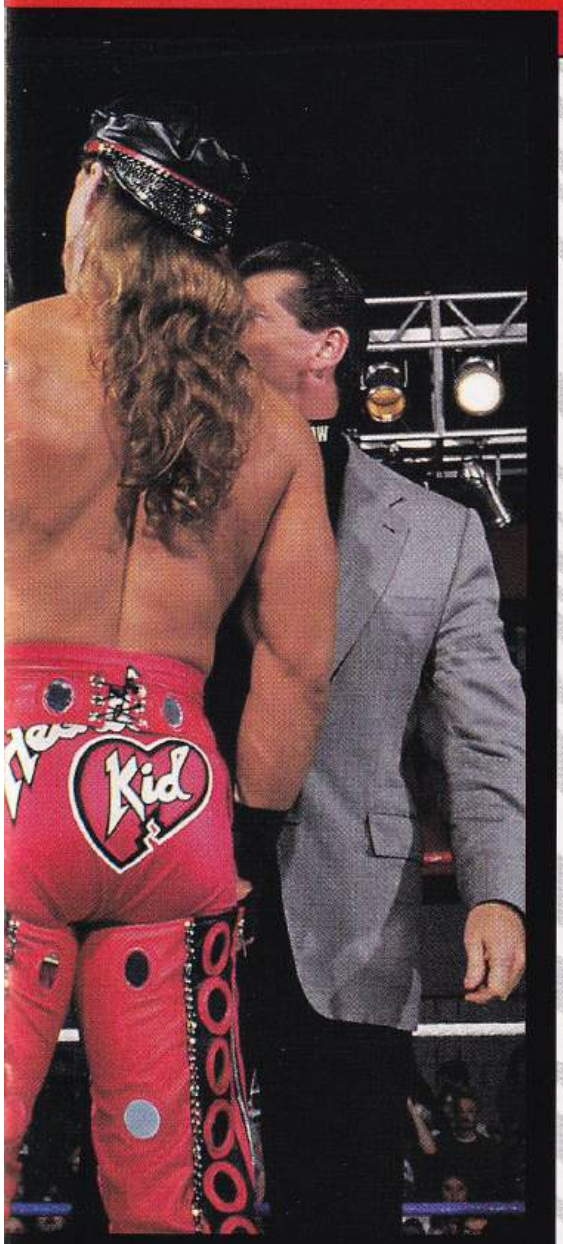
As an extra bonus, the *Royal Rumble* winner was promised the opportunity to walk to the ring at *WrestleMania XI* with gorgeous TV starlet Pamela Anderson. Nevertheless, Shawn reasoned, Anderson wasn't all that good at interfering in wrestling matches. For that, he would need the services of a brand-new bodyguard, Psycho Sid.

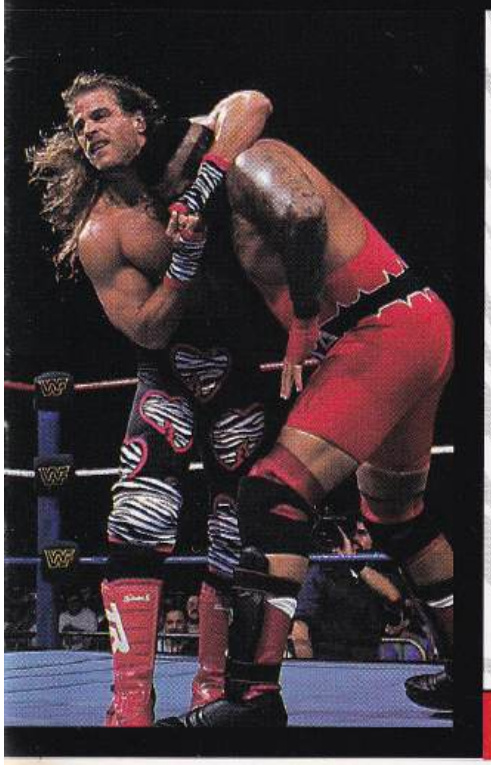
Both Shawn and Diesel would later admit that their hearts weren't completely into *WrestleMania XI*. The pair had been inseparable buddies, and each felt bad battering the other. However, business is business, and the duo did their best. Realizing that he couldn't match his 7-foot-tall adversary in force, Michaels took a different approach, climbing the ropes to deliver a bodypress to Diesel on the arena floor, splashing him from the ring apron and then—in the center of the ring—bulldogging Big Daddy Cool from the top rope and executing a flying elbow.

As had happened so often in his career, Shawn discovered that an accomplice is not necessarily an asset. After Michaels blasted Diesel with a thrust kick—and tied him up in a pinning combination—the challenger noticed the referee outside the ring, fussing with Sid. By the time the official climbed back between the ropes, the champion had recovered, catching Shawn in midair as he leapt off the ropes, bodyslamming the Heartbreak Kid and, eventually, delivering a big foot to the face and then the Jackknife to retain the championship.

One night later, Michaels expressed his disappointment to Sid on *Monday Night Raw*. Not being one accustomed to taking criticism, Sid responded by executing three consecutive powerbombs to his employer. From the dressing room, Diesel could not control himself. When all was said and done, he decided, Shawn Michaels really was his friend. The champ came running to the rescue, and the Heartbreak Kid was reunited with Big Daddy Cool.

It was time for Shawn Michaels to repair whatever damage he'd caused. With the fans now firmly behind him, he battled Kama to a thrilling draw at the 1995 *King of the Ring* tournament. Then in July at *In Your House*, he repaid Diesel by helping him during a crucial moment in his successful title defense against Sid. This was a special lumberjack match in which allies of both men sur-



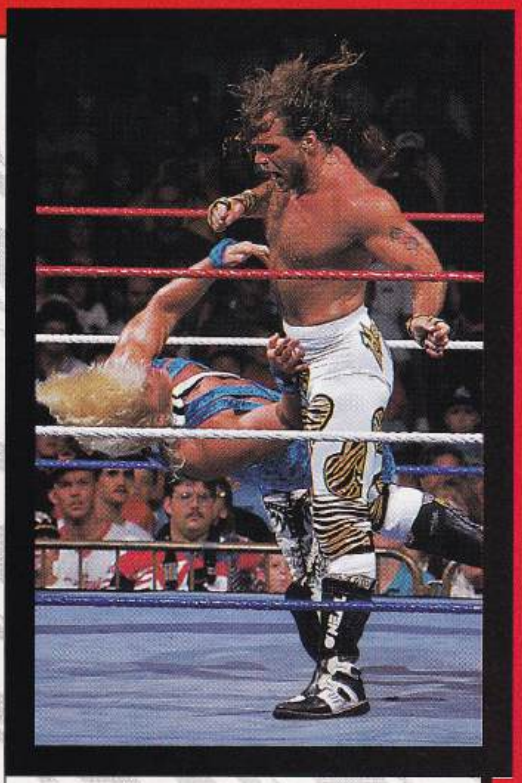


rounded the ring. As the two combatants brawled on the arena floor, Shawn scrambled to the top rope, flew through the air and rained down on Sid.

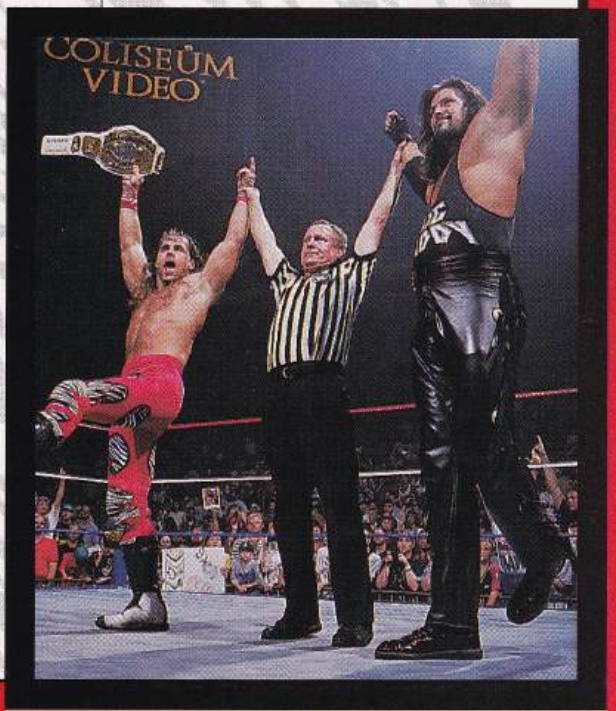
In his own match at *In Your House*, Shawn took on Intercontinental Champion Jeff Jarrett, who was accompanied to ringside by his employee, the Roadie. Having been on the other end of so many two-on-one confrontations, Shawn expertly countered his opponent's tactics. As Jarrett and the Roadie conferred at ringside in the midst of the match, Michaels scaled the ropes and delivered a bodypress to both men on the arena floor. From that point on, Shawn manipulated both men into getting in each other's way. The match ended with Roadie tripping Jarrett, permitting Shawn to put himself in position to deliver the thrust kick that would win him back the Intercontinental Title Belt.

With the championship he never lost in his hands again, Shawn's "housecleaning" continues. At press time, he was preparing for yet another ladder match against Razor Ramon at *SummerSlam*, pledging to learn from his mistakes in the last contest and come out the winner. After that, there's speculation that Michaels and Diesel will make a run for the Tag Team Belts—another title Shawn didn't drop in the ring. Somewhere in the future, he may attempt to procure the World Wrestling Federation Championship, elevating himself to the "triple crown"—the elite category of men to have held all three major titles in the Federation.

Even if his career were



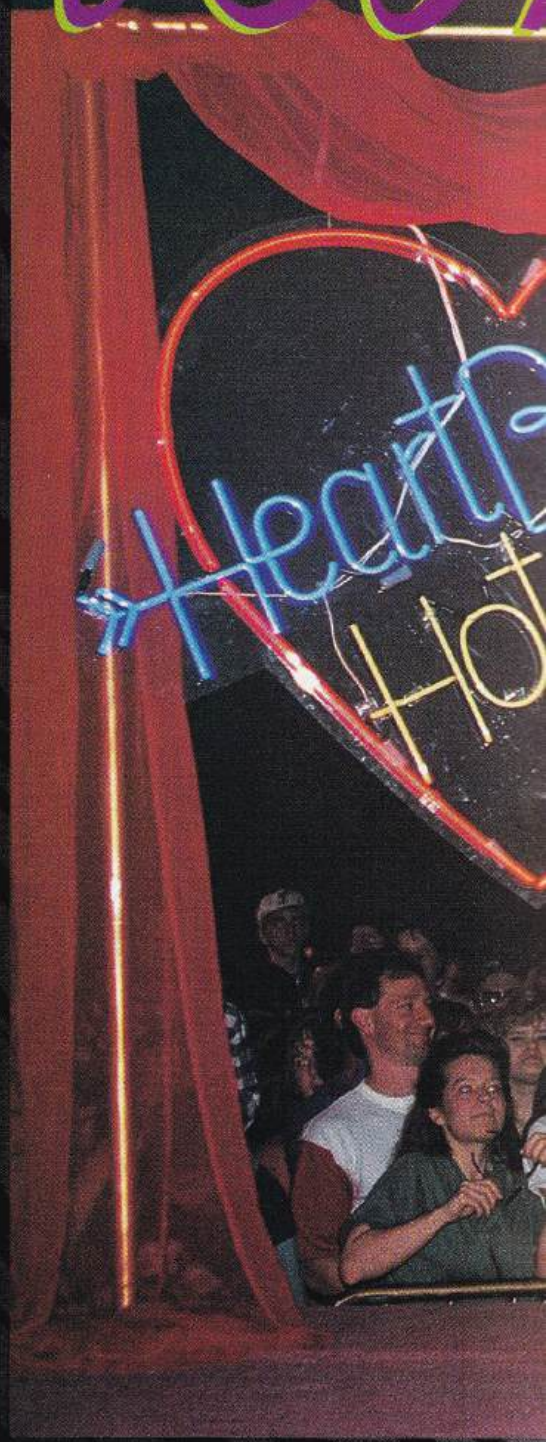
to end tomorrow, Michaels would have achieved what few have: mastery in virtually every aspect of the mat game and a permanent place in the public fascination. Regardless of whether he's played the role of the Rocker, Sexy Boy or Heartbreak Kid, the name Shawn Michaels will forever be recounted with a reverence reserved for the most glorified athletes in the World Wrestling Federation.



CHECKING INTO THE *Heart B*

To use an insider's term, Shawn Michaels is "good on the stick." That's an expression wrestlers use to describe an athlete who's as captivating standing behind a microphone as he is wrestling for the title on pay-per-view.

Michaels' charisma, vocabulary and cutting wit earned him his own interview segment on World Wrestling Federation broadcasts: The Heartbreak Hotel. A typical outfit for the program: leather chaps, a jacket bedecked with mirrors and chains, and a fiery red variation of an old motorcycle cap. Shawn made no secret of the fact that The Heartbreak Hotel was a promotional tool for himself. When Diesel was still working as the Heartbreak Kid's bodyguard, he loomed in between the set's neon letters and cheesy furniture. To this day, Michaels' interview segments are rated among the most entertaining moments in World Wrestling Federation lore.



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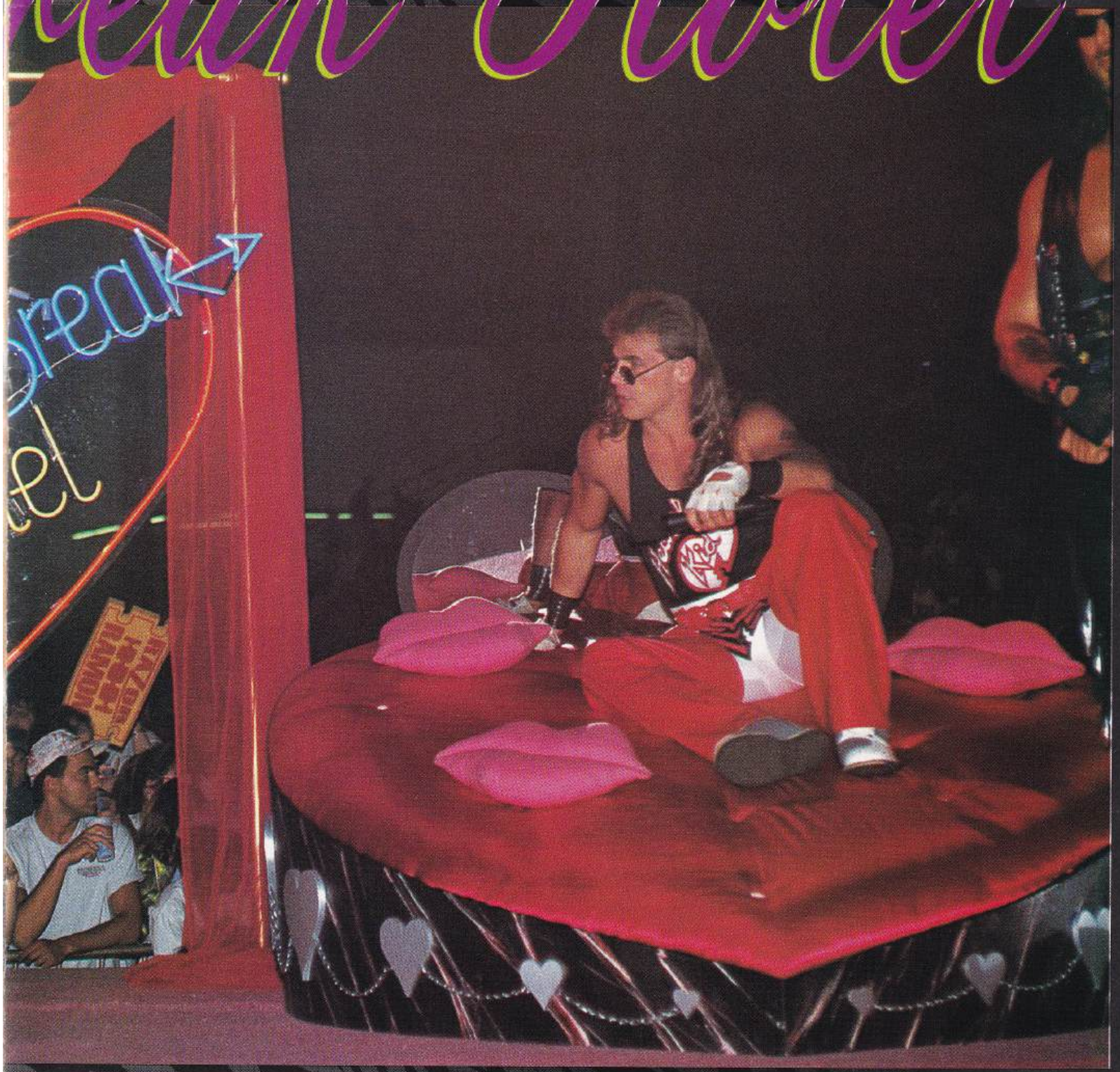


SOME High-lights:

GUESTS—BRET "HIT MAN" HART AND BRITISH BULLDOG: Hart was the World Wrestling Federation Champion at the time, anxiously awaiting his special "submission match" against Bob Backlund at the 1994 *Survivor Series*. The Bulldog would be Hart's second in this clash, while Backlund would be backed by Hit Man's extremely jealous younger brother Owen. According to the rules, a winner could only be declared when the other man submitted or a second tossed in the towel. A short time earlier, Backlund had surprised the Hit Man on *Monday Night Raw*, locking him in the agonizing chicken-wing.

Shawn began the interview segment by asking Hart about the pain he felt during the encounter with Backlund, but before Bret could respond, Michaels pulled the microphone away and elaborated on how dangerous he believed the chicken-wing could be.

Before Bret could reply a second time, Owen and Backlund stormed onto the set. Owen angrily pointed at his brother and vowed that he'd "never, ever, ever" clamp his Sharpshooter on Backlund. Furthermore, he wanted Bulldog to take his time waiting until Bret was truly suffering in Backlund's chicken-wing before throwing in the towel.

A crazed Backlund then took the microphone and gave a strange diatribe about how Owen would never throw in the towel, allowing Backlund time to apply the chicken-wing "until pain lacerates through [Bret's] body just like a cancer."

Turning to Bret, Shawn asked, "Aside from the fact that Mr. Backlund has a smidge too much caffeine included in his diet, just what have you got to say to that?"

Said Bret, "It's scary to see what's happened to Bob Backlund. You talk about old generation, new generation." He looked directly at the challenger. "You're from the lost generation." He then dedicated the upcoming match to "every single young kid around the world who believes in me."

Sadly, Bret's fans gained little satisfaction when the battle took place. The Hit Man lost the title when Owen persuaded his own mother to throw in the towel.

GUESTS—MILLION DOLLAR MAN TED DIBIASE AND HIS UNDERTAKER: When the Undertaker vanished from the World Wrestling Federation after a fatal coffin match with Yokozuna, rumors abounded. Some said wrestling's Grim Reaper had met his demise. Yet "sightings" of the Undertaker were reported everywhere. DiBiase came to *The Heartbreak Hotel* purportedly to clear the air.

"This is the greatest day of my whole life!" he shouted. "I've done it! I've done it! I've done it! He's mine!"

The Million Dollar Man admitted that many people doubted he could produce the Undertaker, but holding up a fistful of dollars, he added, "Nobody else had the resources to do it."

As DiBiase spoke, the lights dimmed, funeral chimes were

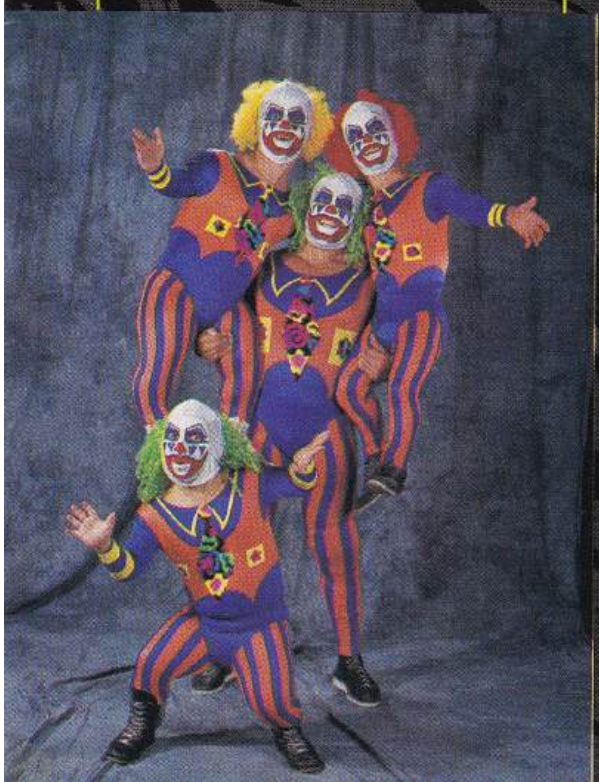
heard and a creature very much resembling the Undertaker lumbered to the set. Apparently, Undertaker's manager, mortician Paul Bearer, had been unable to summon the forces to lure the Reaper back to his side.

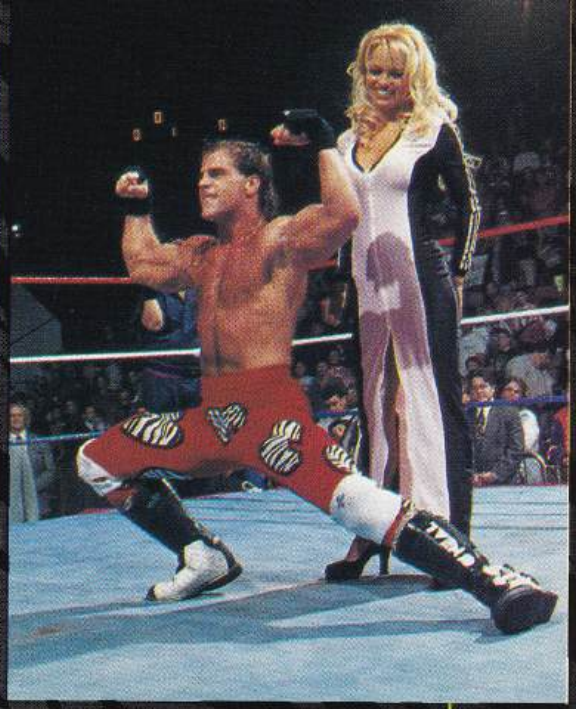
An excited Michaels congratulated DiBiase, who then instructed the "nickel-and-dime peons" in the audience to listen closely to his Undertaker's words.

"There's nothing to fear but fear itself—and the wrath of the Undertaker rests in peace," the man stated in a grim voice.

Shawn Michaels believed he'd gotten the inside story on a mystery rocking the wrestling world, but DiBiase was deceiving him. The Million Dollar Man's Undertaker was an imposter. The real Undertaker—led to the ring by Paul Bearer—would defeat him at *SummerSlam '94*.

GUESTS—DOINK, DINK, WINK AND PINK: To balance the odds in his feud against Jerry "The King" Lawler and his band of miniature helpers, Doink the Clown entered the set of *The Heartbreak Hotel* with two pint-sized assistants, Dink and Wink. Seven-foot-tall Diesel seemed uncomfortable as





the two scurried about at his feet. Then Doink looked over at the announcer's table, where Lawler was seated, and proclaimed, "Oh, Kingy, I've got a really big surprise for you."

His "surprise" was a third little clown named Pink, who immediately rushed onto the set and ran under Diesel's legs. When Shawn demanded that Doink control his charges, the three small jesters did the same to him and started using Michaels' heart-shaped bed as a sliding pond.

Lawler would soon team with his clique of midgets at the 1994 *Survivor Series* against Doink and his cohorts. Lawler's team won, but the little people on his squad resented the way the self-professed "King" demeaned their contributions. Before the night was over, all six midgets had turned against him—and Doink aggravated the situation by throwing a pie in Lawler's face.

GUEST—A CARDBOARD CUTOUT OF DIESEL: Shawn was in his glory, having just won the 1995 *Royal Rumble*. Now he was scheduled to challenge World Wrestling Federation Champion Diesel at *WrestleMania XI*. He'd promised the fans he'd bring Diesel to *The Heartbreak Hotel*. Instead, he produced a lifesize cardboard cutout of the champion.

As Shawn introduced his "guest," a small puff of smoke belched from a canister in front of the cutout. Observed Michaels, "That was some sort of fizzling pyrotechnics there, but that's understandable. Your pyrotechnics are fizzling. Your career as World Wrestling Federation Champion is definitely fizzling. I guess it's only par for the course."

The piece of cardboard, Shawn contended, proved that Diesel was "a paper champion." He peeked behind the cutout and declared, "He has no backbone."

Michaels asked the cutout what went through his mind when the Heartbreak Kid won the *Royal Rumble*. Naturally, no answer came forth. Shawn nodded, then told the crowd, "Ever since I met him, the same thing's been going through his mind." He whistled through his teeth. "Nothing."

Looking back at the Diesel mockup, Michaels posed a question about the upcoming championship match at *WrestleMania XI*, then glanced at the cameras and commented, "He's scared stiff. He doesn't say a word."

After pronouncing himself the "wrestler of the '90s" and future World Wrestling Federation Champion, Shawn knocked the cutout of Diesel over, taunting, "Big Daddy's fallen—and he can't and he won't get up."

Months later, Big Daddy Cool admitted that he actually found Shawn's routine amusing. Fortunately for Michaels, the World Wrestling Federation kingpin not only got up after their *WrestleMania XI* main event but reunited with the Heartbreak Kid and became his staunchest defender. WF

SHAWN'S LADDER MATC

THE BATTLE THAT STILL HAU

It was supposed to be Shawn Michaels' crowning moment. When he'd failed to defend his World Wrestling Federation Intercontinental Belt during an extended vacation, he was stripped of the title. In early 1994, at the *Royal Rumble*, Razor Ramon was awarded the championship after a tournament. Michaels returned, still wearing his old Intercontinental Belt and shouting conspiracy. The only reason Razor was champ, the Heartbreak Kid insisted, was that Federation officials wanted it that way. At *WrestleMania X*, he assured the public, he'd win back the title that was rightfully his.

Just to make things interesting, the Michaels-Ramon clash would be a ladder match. Both title belts were extended from a cable hung from the ceiling of New York's Madison Square Garden. The two combatants would have to brawl their way up a ladder to grab the prize.

Shawn began the battle aggressively, felling Ramon with a single-leg takedown and running the ropes. When Michaels tried a hiptoss, Razor blocked it. So the Heartbreak Kid poked his rival in the eyes. The angry Cubano came back with a choke slam and a series of fists, but Shawn again ran the ropes and surprised Ramon with a neckbreaker. The Bad Guy rose from the canvas, only to be hurled to the arena floor—where Michaels' bodyguard Diesel battered him.

Although many fans had been dismissing Michaels' conspiracy theories as paranoia, the referee appeared to have it in for him. Generally, allies of a wrestler who get too close to the action are issued a warning. The arbiter in this contest simply ejected Diesel from the building.

As Michaels was watching the exchange, Ramon nailed him with a hard right, slung him across the ring, flipped him into the turnbuckle and clotheslined him over the ring ropes. Once on the arena floor, Razor cracked his opponent across the jaw, then removed the protective mats from ringside.

It was a foolish maneuver. While Ramon was concentrating on his chore, Michaels recovered enough to smash him and take the fight back into the ring. There, Ramon attempted to finish off his op-

H WITH RAZOR RAMON

UNTS THE HEARTBREAK KID

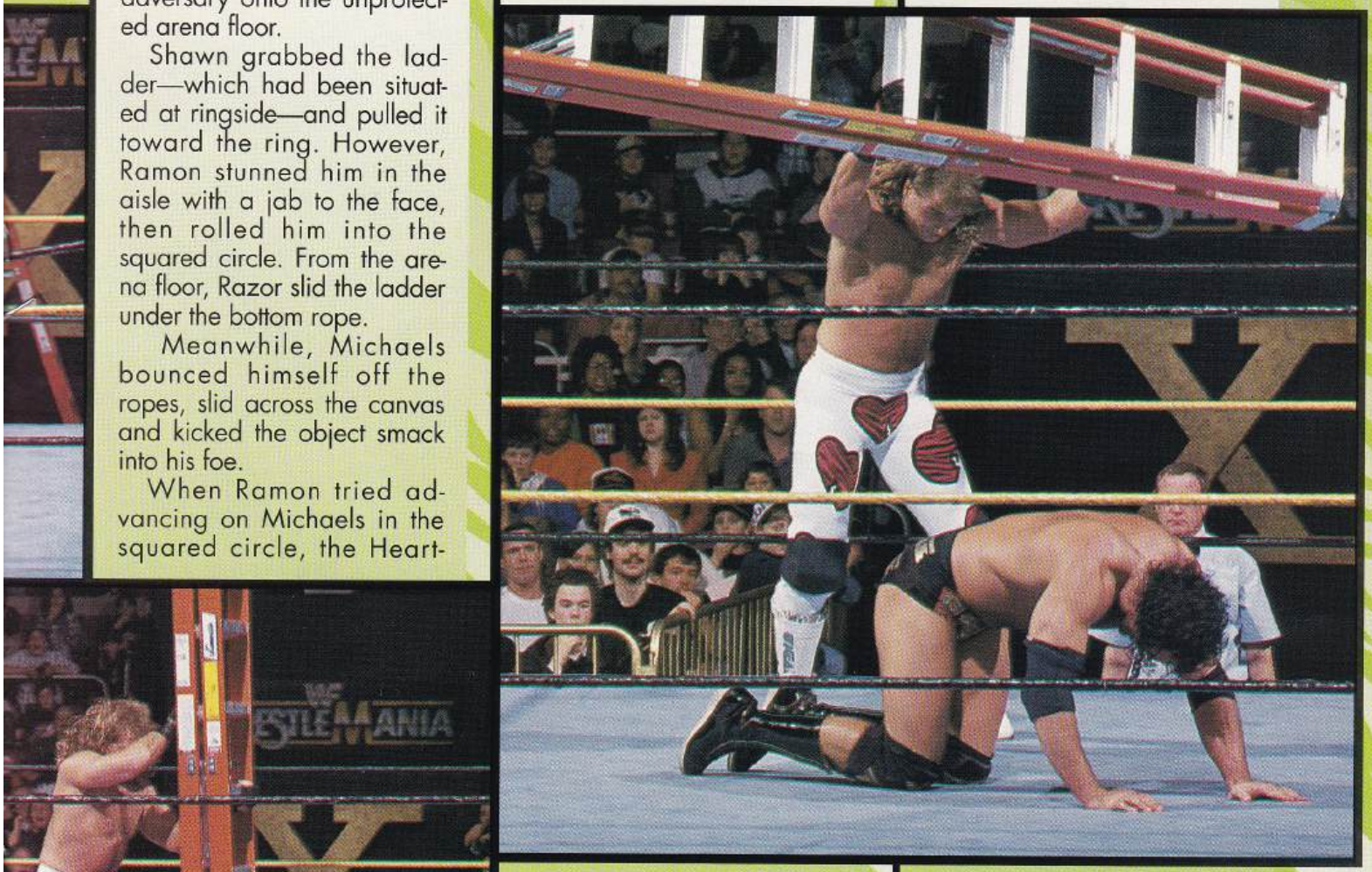
ponent with the Razor's Edge, but Shawn managed to block the move and backflipped his adversary onto the unprotected arena floor.

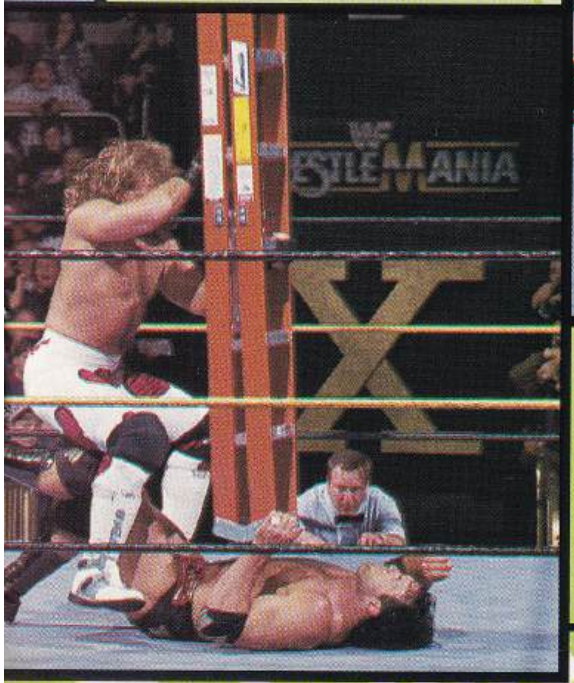
Shawn grabbed the ladder—which had been situated at ringside—and pulled it toward the ring. However, Ramon stunned him in the aisle with a jab to the face, then rolled him into the squared circle. From the arena floor, Razor slid the ladder under the bottom rope.

Meanwhile, Michaels bounced himself off the ropes, slid across the canvas and kicked the object smack into his foe.

When Ramon tried advancing on Michaels in the squared circle, the Heartbreak Kid lifted the ladder and jammed it into his adversary's lower abdomen.

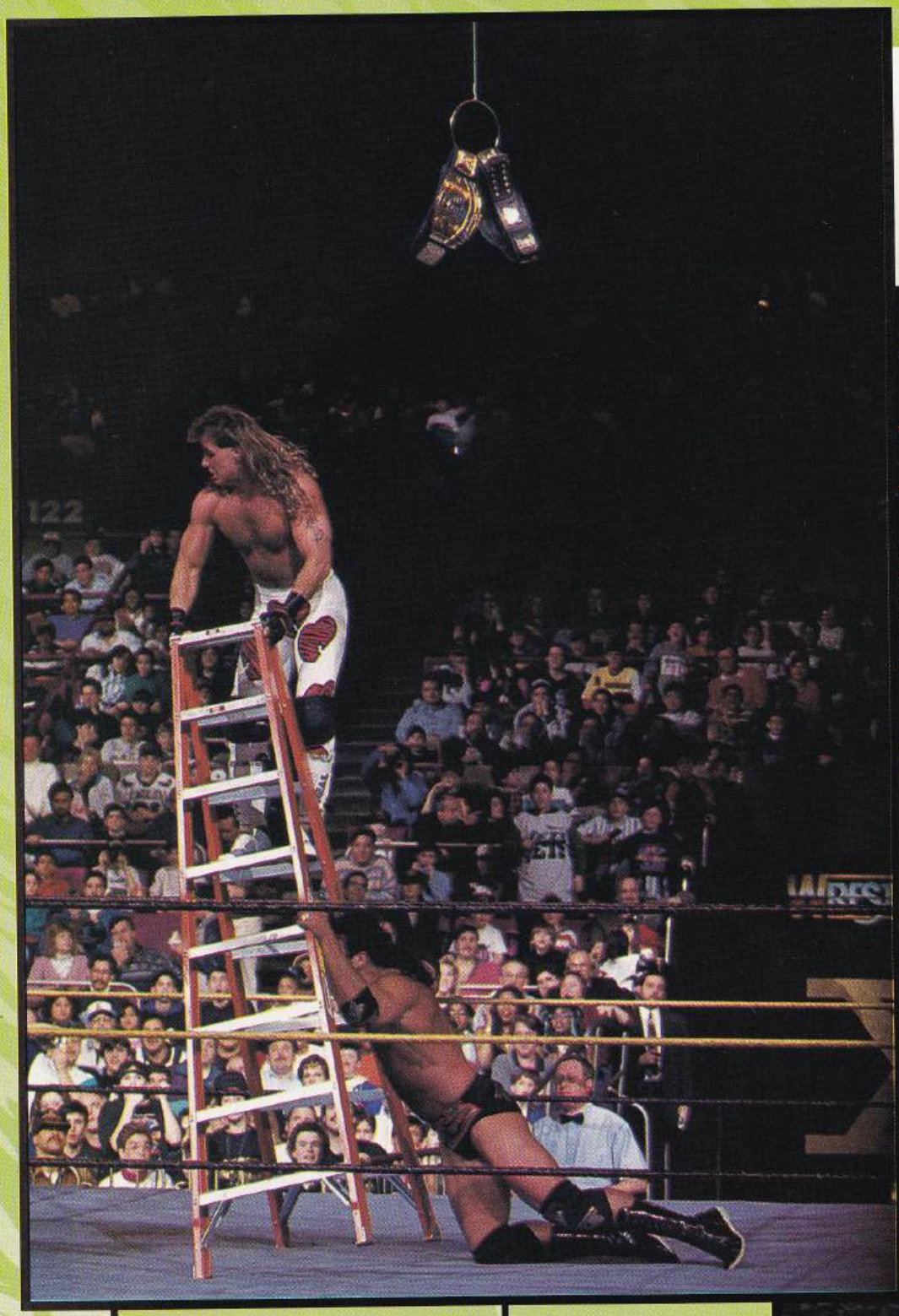
pain. Before he could come up with a solution, Michaels lifted the ladder and slammed



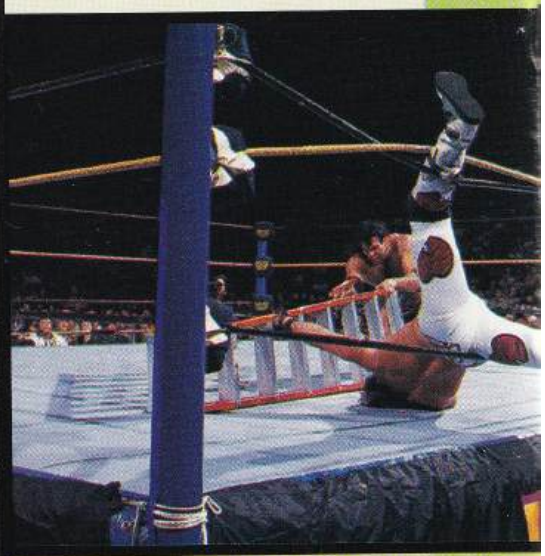


As Ramon was lying sprawled out on the mat, Michaels hoisted up the ladder again and drove it into his opponent's chest. Ramon was on all fours now, desperately trying to cope with his

it onto Razor's spine. Somehow, Ramon managed to stumble to the ropes. As he leaned on the strands, though, Shawn pitched the weighty weapon into his opponent, jarring his back.



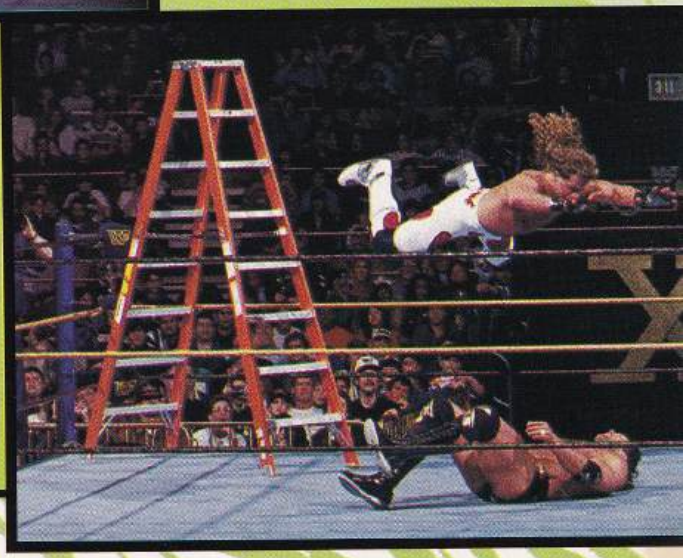
fingers strained upward. Just as he was about to achieve victory, Razor tipped the ladder over. Michaels hurdled toward the ropes, hitting his neck across the top cable.



Incredibly, Shawn got up, positioned the ladder against the turnbuckles and tried whipping Razor into it. Ramon reversed the effort, and Michaels flew into the object, crashing to ringside. The tough Cuban pulled the ladder outside the ring and rammed it into Shawn. As Michaels stumbled forward, Razor ran into him with the object again. Still at ringside, Ramon slanted the ladder against the ropes—and flipped Michaels into the metal. Grasping onto the ladder, Shawn fell backward, with

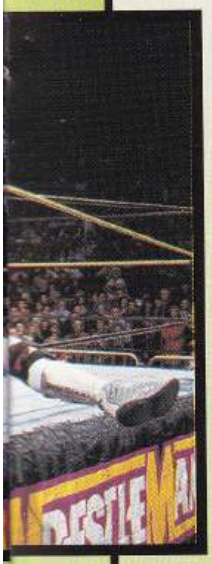
Razor was immobile on the mat. Trying to take advantage of the moment, Shawn opened the ladder and began to climb toward the suspended title belts. Ramon reached after him—and pulled down the Heartbreak Kid's tights. Infuriated, Shawn leapt from the ladder and hit Razor with a flying elbow.

Once again, Michaels mounted the ladder, but this time he wasn't going for the belts. Instead, he jumped through the air and splashed Ramon on the canvas. Believing that Razor was finished, Shawn took the ladder step by step. His arm stretched. His



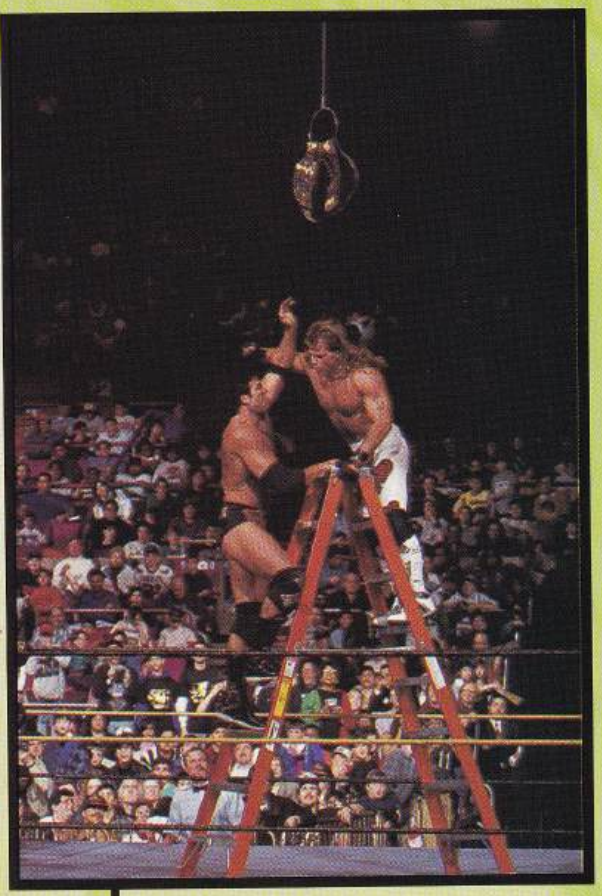
the weapon banging right on top of him.

Michaels managed to get into the ring. Ramon followed, whacking Shawn across the jaw with the object. As Michaels sailed over the ropes, Razor reopened the ladder under the belts. He climbed heavenward—just as Shawn was scaling the turnbuckles. Before Razor could reach the belts, the Heartbreak Kid took off, colliding with his opponent and tipping over the ladder.

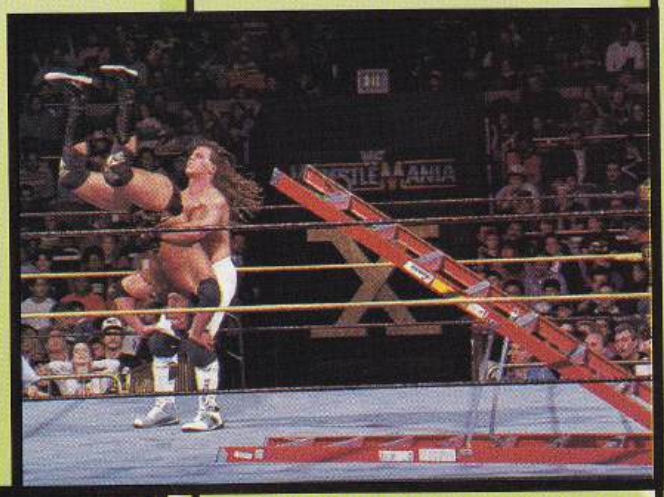


Michaels put the ladder back in place and started ascending. At the same time, Razor went up from the other side. At the top, the two of them went blow for blow until Razor reached forward, scooped up Shawn and tossed him over a shoulder. Unfortunately for the Bad Guy, the wobbly ladder fell as Michaels plummeted to the canvas.

When Razor placed the ladder upright this time, the metal was twisted. Still, Razor climbed, clawing for the belts. From the mat, Shawn looked up and sprang to action, dropkicking the ladder and sending Ramon tumbling. Hoping to eliminate his opponent, Michaels then whipped him off the ropes and met him with a side-kick to the face followed by a piledriver. Next, the Heartbreak Kid dragged the ladder to the corner, got on the top rope, leaned on the object and rode it onto Ramon's body.



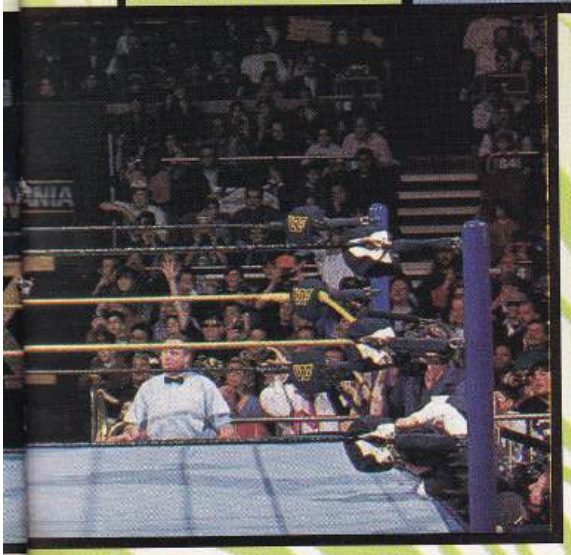
Convinced of his opponent's ruin, Shawn coolly strode up the ladder, but Ramon showed the same healing abilities as his foe. He hopped off the mat and shoulderblocked the ladder. The object toppled over, and Shawn plunged, legs spread, across the top rope, his foot tangled in the strands.

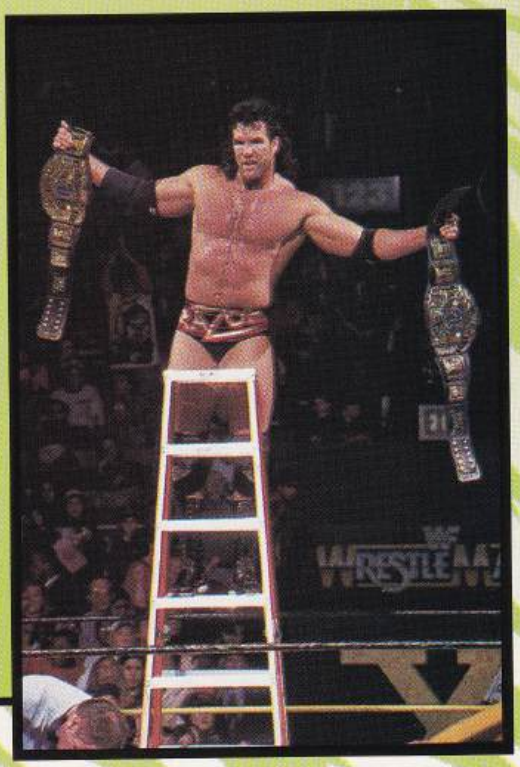


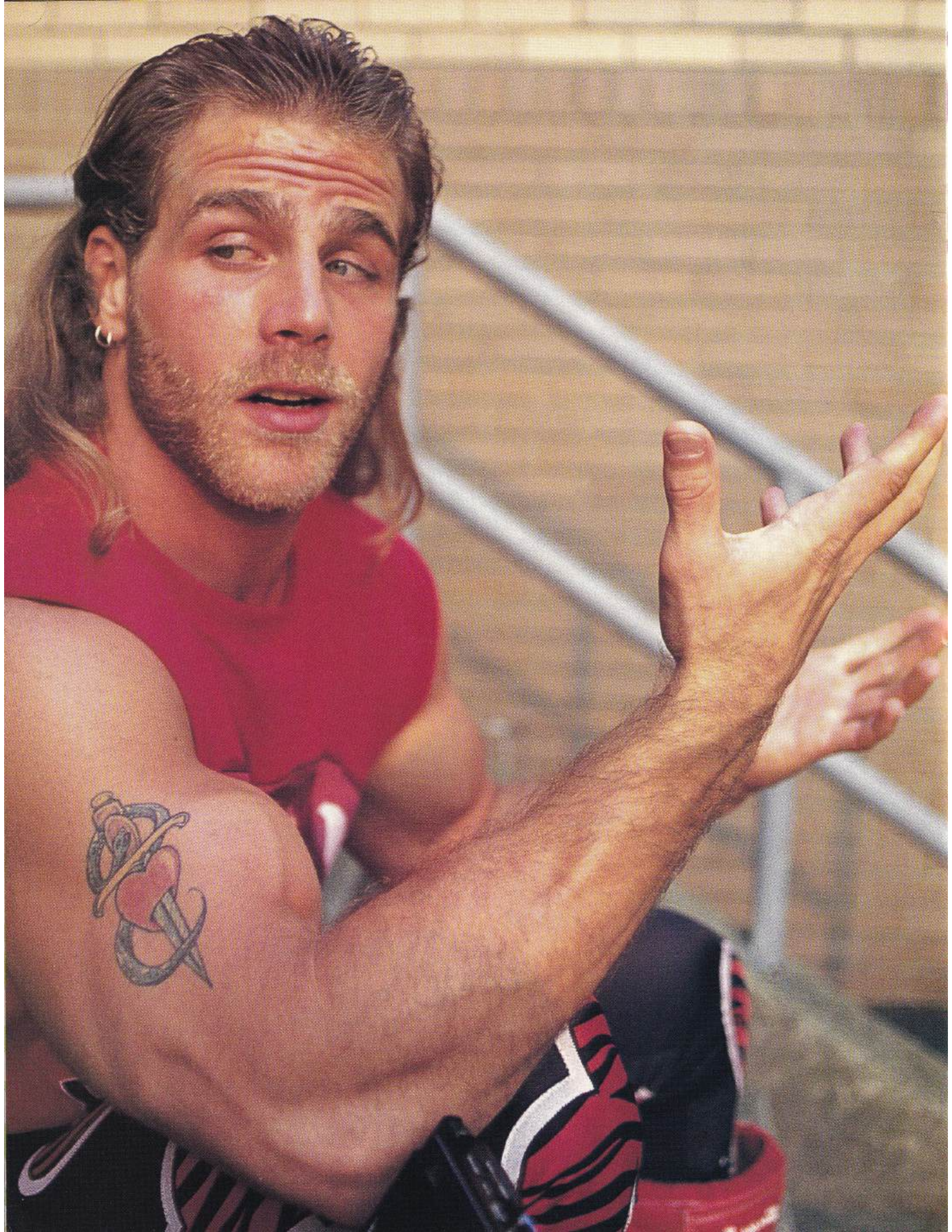
As Michaels scrambled to untie himself, Razor went up the ladder and finally got the belts, firmly establishing himself as the undisputed World Wrestling Federation Intercontinental Champion.

Shawn accepted the loss gracefully and would later consider Ramon a friend. Nevertheless, the Heartbreak Kid never forgot the humiliation of this loss.

At *SummerSlam '95*, when he had the opportunity to even the odds with Ramon, Michaels forgot completely about his camaraderie with the Bad Guy and once again went for the jugular in a second ladder match. WF







Up Close and Personal:

Shawn Michaels

By Keith Elliot Greenberg

As this issue was going to press, the Heartbreak Kid was preparing for a reprieve of his heralded "ladder match" with Razor Ramon at WrestleMania X. The rematch would take place at SummerSlam '95, and experts were forecasting a classic.

A reporter who visited Michaels' training camp was surprised to find the Intercontinental Champion devoid of his usual playfulness. This was an individual focused on his upcoming battle, and he was determined to prove something.

Question: Normally when you're training before a big match, the atmosphere almost feels like a party. There are pretty girls running around all over the place, music blasting, people hanging out and telling jokes. This is very different from anything that I've ever seen. It's very somber. Does the mood indicate that we're seeing a "new" Shawn Michaels?

SHAWN: I wouldn't say "new." Maybe I'd say "different." Because this is different from any match I've ever had before. Maybe you could say it means the most. And I'll tell you why. If you think back to the time just before *WrestleMania X*, I didn't lose the Intercontinental Title. I was the champion, went on a long vacation, and—in my absence—World Wrestling Federation President Jack Tunney chose to strip me of the belt. I didn't get a letter, a telegram or a message on my answering machine warning me. I just came back to work, and I wasn't the champion anymore. Razor Ramon had won the belt in a tournament, and I was sure I'd beat him at *WrestleMania X* and take back the championship. Maybe I was a little naive, a little cocky, a little too sure of myself, but—as history proved—it didn't work out that way.

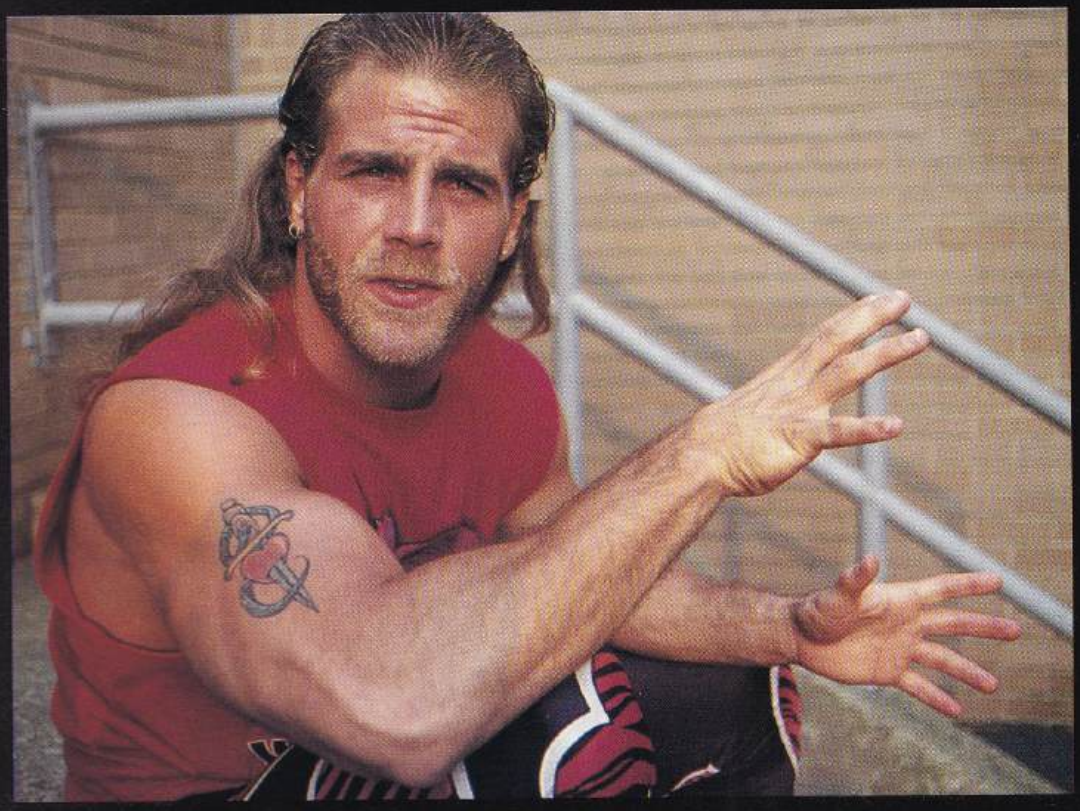
My match with Razor Ramon might have been the best battle I ever fought. I can honestly say I put more into that fight than when I wrestled Diesel for the World Wrestling Federation Championship at *WrestleMania XI*. You see, Diesel was always—in my heart—my buddy, and I couldn't go all-out against him. However, Ramon had something that rightfully was mine, and I was determined to crush him.

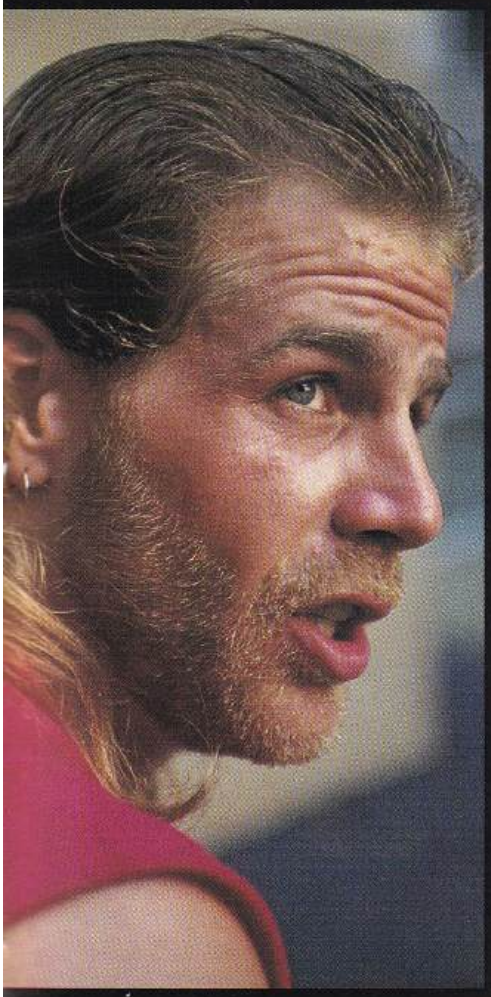
Well, hats off to Razor Ramon. He won the match at *WrestleMania X*, but he won't beat me again in our ladder match at *SummerSlam*. Every single day, I'm reminded of how important this match is. My body still aches from that first match. And Razor Ramon never hesitates to refresh everybody's memory of how the Heartbreak Kid went down at *WrestleMania X*. Maybe you can say that I'm obsessed with beating him this time.

This ladder match has nothing to do with my fans. This battle's for me. I'm the Intercontinental Champion now. Razor Ramon's the challenger. And, after we smash each other's bodies and break each other's bones, he's still gonna be a contender for the Intercontinental Title.

Question: You mentioned your quest to take the World Wrestling Federation Championship from Diesel at WrestleMania XI. Were you surprised that, the very next night when you were attacked by your bodyguard Sid, none other than Diesel came to your aid?

SHAWN: Looking back on it now, it isn't surprising. I've said this before. When Sid was my bodyguard, it was strictly a business relationship. He was a big tough guy, a lot of people were gunning for me, and I was paying him to watch my back. We didn't go to nightclubs together, meet each other's families or get together on Sunday afternoons to play miniature golf. It was business. Strictly business. Now when Diesel was my bodyguard, we were friends, close friends who really cared about each other. I know, we had a falling out—and it was both of our faults—but the feelings were still





there. So when Sid jumped me on *Monday Night Raw*, it makes sense that Diesel stormed the ring and made the save. That's what good friends do for each other.

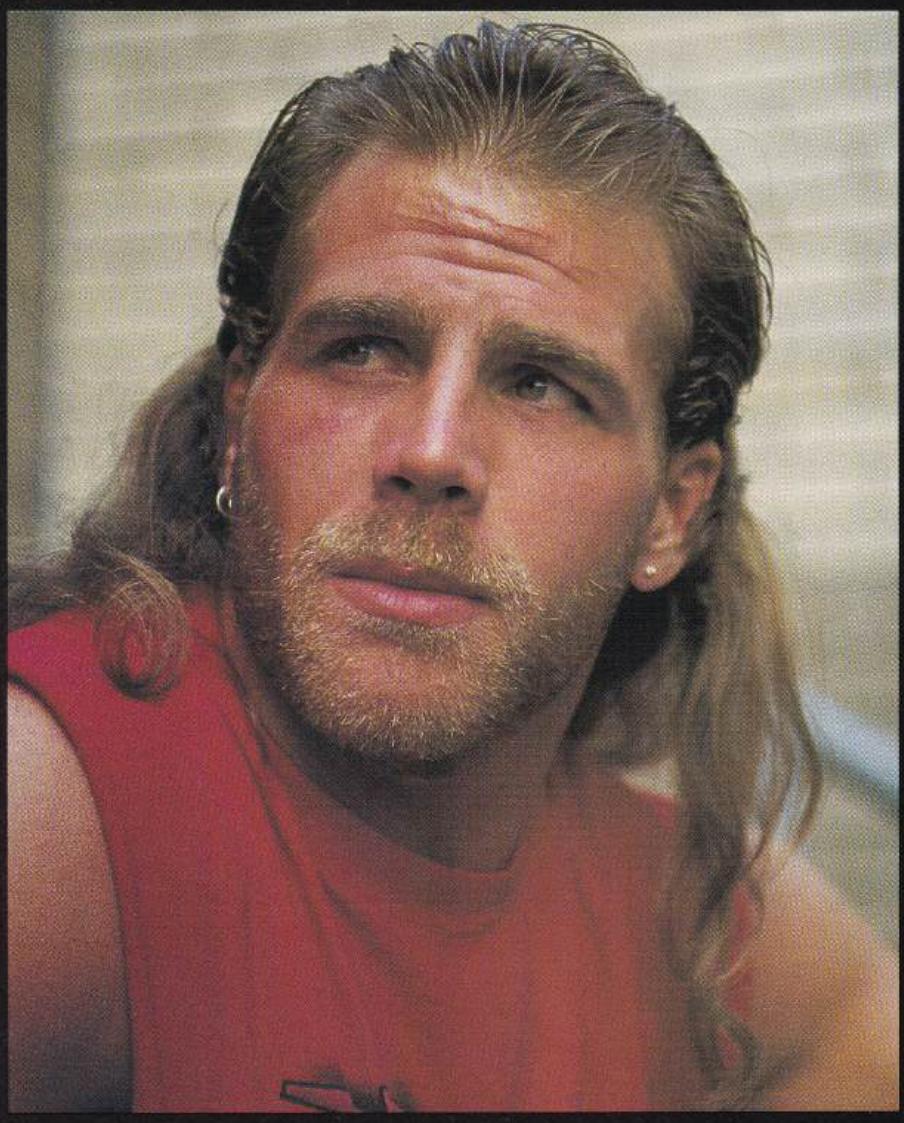
Question: Do good friends give each other title shots?

SHAWN: I know what you're getting at. Diesel's the champ. He walks into that ring every night with the World Wrestling Federation Belt strapped around his waist. He's the man of the hour, the one everyone wants to beat. As the Intercontinental Champion, I'm a No. 1 contender, but let me answer your question directly. Do friends give each other title shots? Yes, they do. And Diesel gave me one at *WrestleMania XI*. He hasn't avoided me. In fact, he's the one who asked the World Wrestling Federation to give him an open contract. I'm sure if I ever wanted to take a crack at the title again, he'd let me have it. Right now, though, we need each other. The same people stalking the Heartbreak Kid are the ones trying to take down Diesel. At this point in time, we're better off together than apart.

Question: It's been a couple of months now since you've had the fans on your side. Have you gotten over the initial shock?

SHAWN: Hey, the Heartbreak Kid was never shocked to hear people cheering for him. The Heartbreak Kid expected it. Go into your tape library and look at my *WrestleMania X* match against Razor Ramon. Look at the *Survivor Series* match when I challenged Bret "Hit Man" Hart for the World Wrestling Federation Championship.

Order the *WrestleMania XI* tape from Coliseum Video and see how hard I fought against Diesel—even though I think of the guy as a brother. The Heartbreak Kid has always put a thousand percent into every match. And the fans appreciate that. By the same token, it feels good to have them vocalizing that a lot more. When my name's announced in the middle of the ring and the fans go nuts, I have to admit it's pretty nice. So let's sum it up this way—the fans appreciate me, and I appreciate their appreciation. WF



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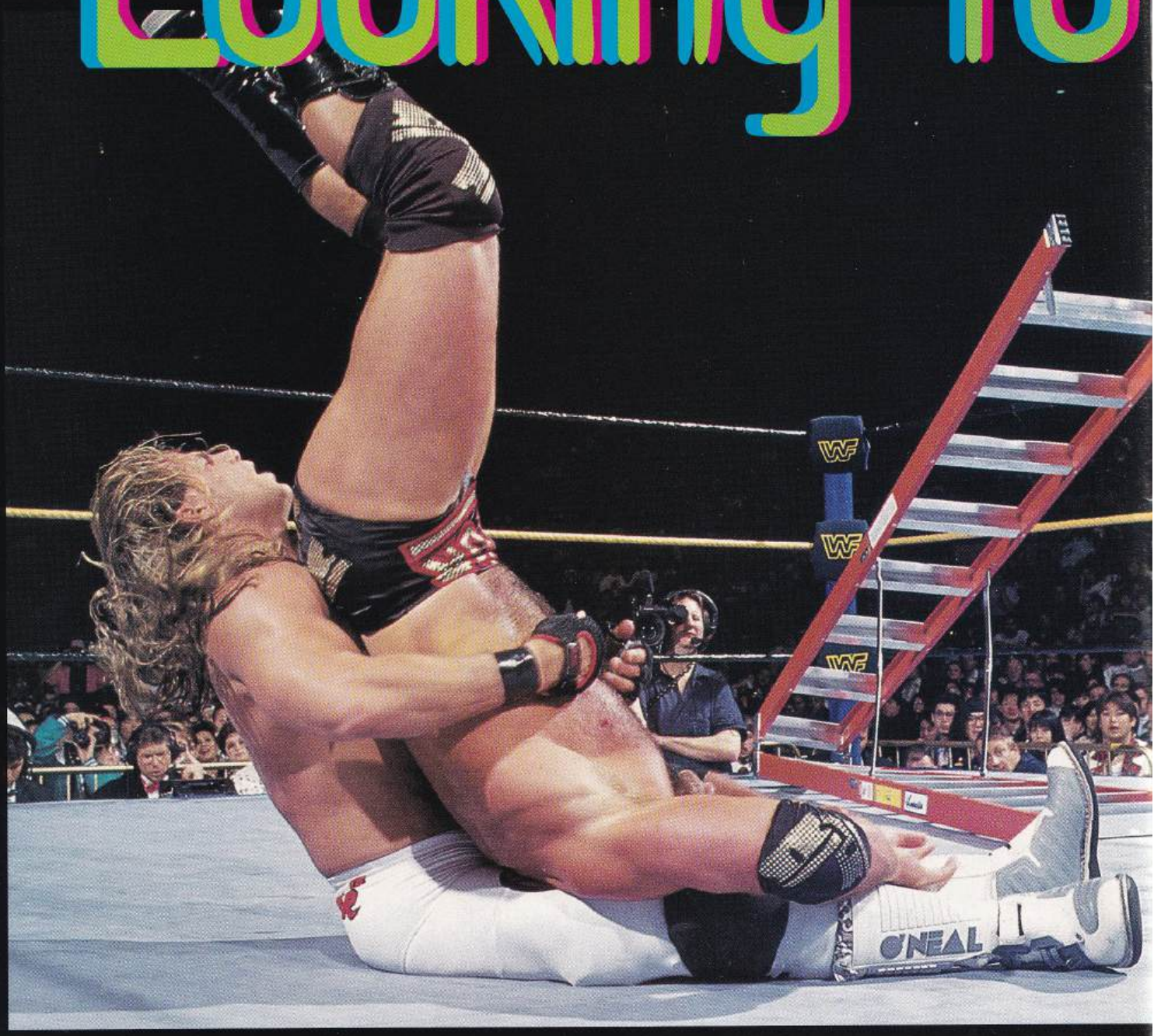
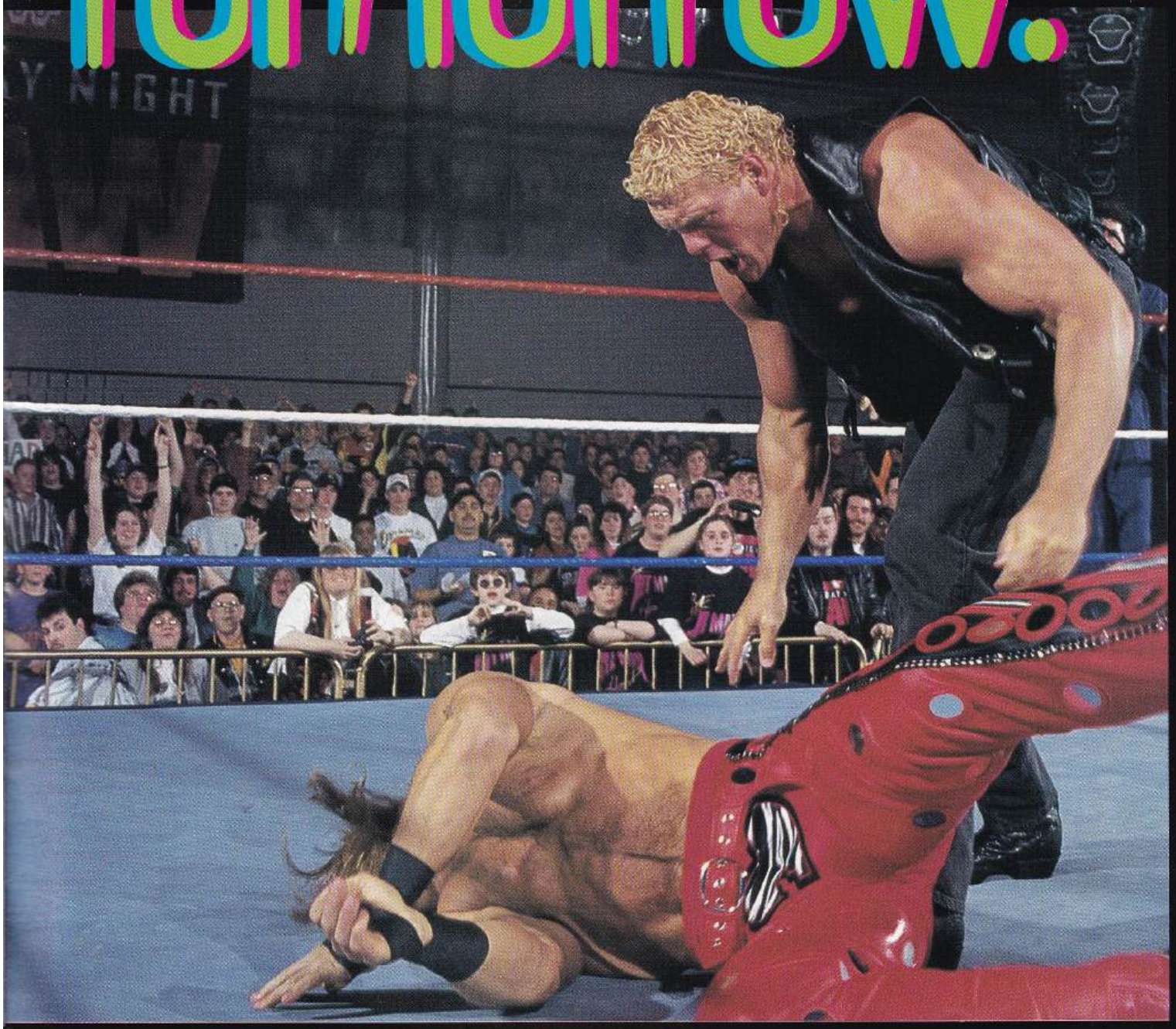


What the future holds for the Heartbreak Kid

Tomorrow:



Just as this publication was going to press, Shawn Michaels made a stunning announcement. He was not going to take on Sid at SummerSlam '95, as most of the wrestling community anticipated. Instead, he would try to settle an old score, going against Razor Ramon, a man who's been his ally as of late, in another ladder match.

What the future holds for the Heartbreak Kid

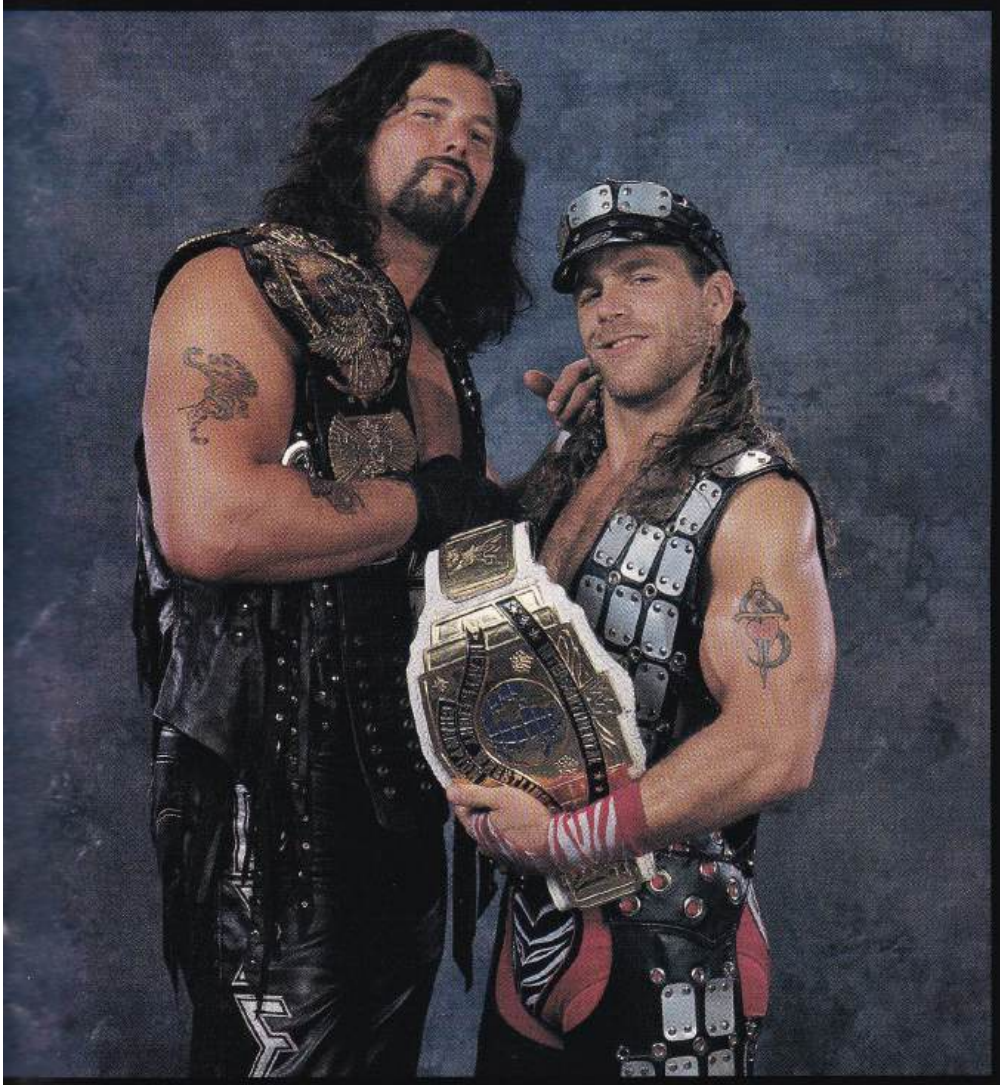
Anyone who has followed Michaels' career understands the move. Beneath his smirking exterior, Shawn is a perfectionist haunted by failure. His *WrestleMania X* clash with Razor Ramon—considered one of the greatest battles of all time—ended disappointingly for the Heartbreak Kid. Since that time, Michaels has dreamed about cleaning the slate, standing across the ring from Ramon at a major pay-per-view event and emerging triumphantly.

"You hear the old saying a lot: 'Don't do anything if you're not going to do it right,'" says a confidant of the World Wrestling Federation Intercontinental Champion, "but when Shawn says it, he means it. People didn't have a lot of confidence in him when he started as a singles competitor in the Federation. He was young, he was smaller than many of his opponents and he was primarily a tag team wrestler. I think Shawn proved to everybody that he's one of the greats. That's because if he doesn't achieve something on the first shot, he'll go for it again and again until he's the master."

Just as Michaels has craved another shot at Ramon, he also is awaiting the opportunity to strike back at Sid. Shawn never forgot the vicious attack perpetrated by his former bodyguard one day after *WrestleMania XI*. Despite Sid's size advantage, Michaels has often thrived best when playing the role of giant killer. Nothing will satisfy him more than putting the big brute on the canvas and forcing him to beg for forgiveness.

If he does intensify his feud with Sid, Shawn must be very wary of the man-monster's allies. Sid is a member of Million Dollar Man Ted DiBiase's Corporation, and that means that anyone he battles automatically makes enemies with fellow Million Dollar Corporation members such as King Kong Bundy, Tatanka and Kama—who's already had it out with the Heartbreak Kid in a 30-minute draw at the last *King of the Ring* tournament.

With these types of adversaries, Shawn may be in dire need of another bodyguard. The first man Michaels employed in



this position, Diesel, eventually became the World Wrestling Federation Champion. His replacement, Sid, is arguably now the most dangerous individual in the squared circle.

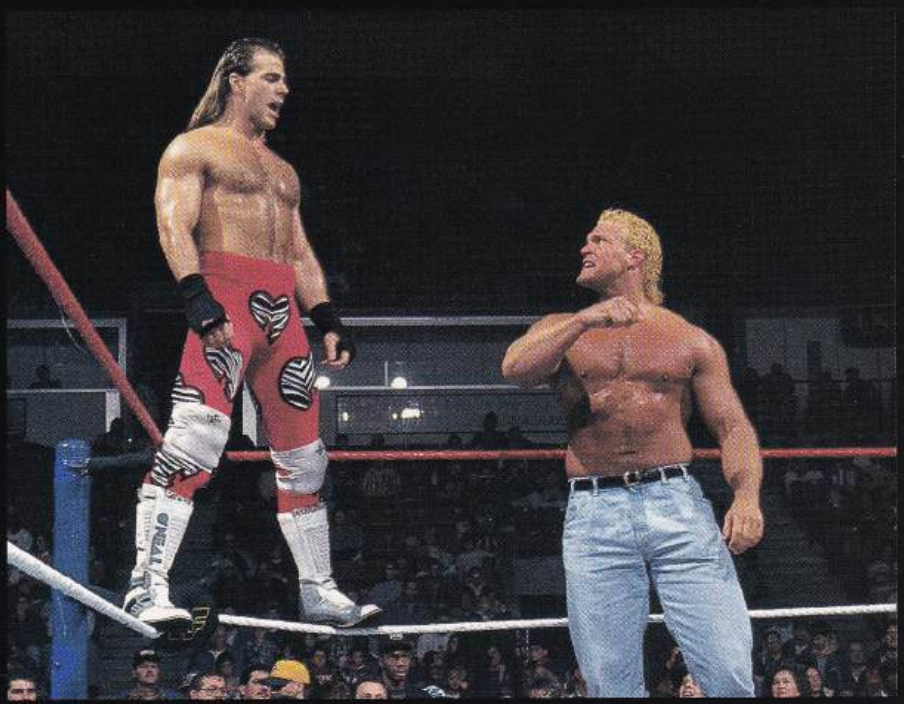
Whether or not a new bodyguard will live up to his responsibilities as Shawn Michaels' employee, the Heartbreak Kid has a reputation for picking men of uncommon character, destined to have an impact on the World Wrestling Federation for years after their contract with the Intercontinental titlist expires.

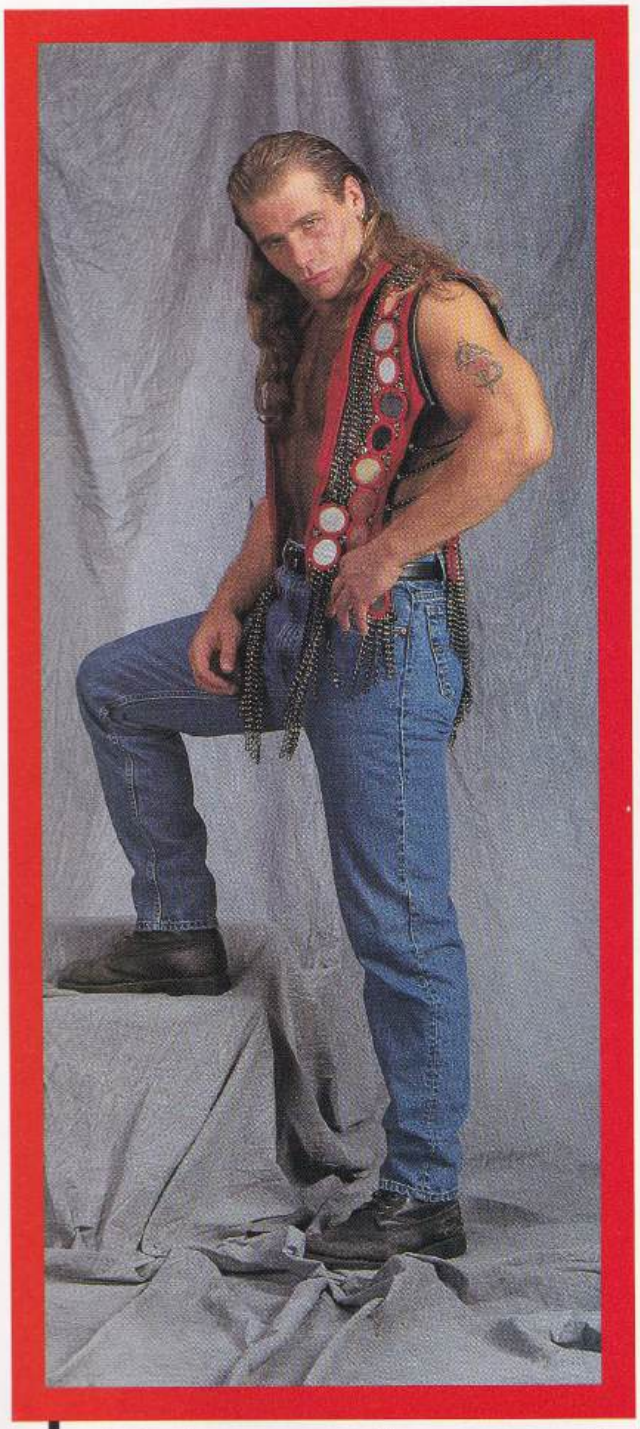
If Shawn decides not to rely on a bodyguard this time, he's certain to depend on his relationship with the World Wrestling Federation kingpin. Although Diesel and Michaels have torn at each other like lions in the ring, Shawn still considers Big Daddy Cool to be his best friend—as well as the best hope of protecting him against the ever-growing list of adversaries.

However, a review of the Heartbreak Kid's career leads to speculation that he will square off against Diesel again. The reasons have nothing to do with an inherent lack of loyalty in either man, but Shawn's desire to be the best at everything he does.

Diesel is the current World Wrestling Federation Champion. Michaels is not. Eventually, Shawn is more than likely to demand a shot at the most coveted prize in the sport of kings.

"Let's look at it this way," says the Heartbreak Kid's friend. "Michaels has been the World Wrestling Federation Tag Team Champion. He's currently in his third reign as World Wrestling Federation Intercontinental Champion. And believe me, Shawn Michaels isn't a man who looks back. He looks ahead. He's at the crest of his career—and the only place for him to go is up." WF





20 Something

Shawn's a guy who gets around. So, we're going to keep you moving in our trivia quiz, too. The quiz consists of 23 questions covering all aspects of Shawn's life—both in and out of the squared circle Questions 1-20 are multiple choice. Each is worth five points. You are on your own in questions 21-23, which is why each of them will get you 10 points. A perfect score is 130 points, but consider yourself a big Shawn supporter if you get 85 or more. 70 is good, but less than 50 suggests you are no fan of the Heartbreak Kid.

1. Let's start you with an easy one. Shawn is a native of:
a) Dallas, Texas
b) San Antonio, Texas
c) Columbus, Georgia

2. Shawn has a tattoo of a dagger piercing a heart on:
a) his chest
b) his right arm
c) his left arm

3. Michaels has appeared on the cover of *World Wrestling Federation Magazine* a couple of times this year. The first time, he was:
a) with the sultry Pamela Anderson
b) with his pal Diesel
c) unaccompanied

4. Shawn once teamed with Marty Jannetty to form the Rockers. They were known as:
a) the Masters of Mayhem
b) the Masters of Motion
c) the Boy Toys

5. There was a controversy surrounding the Rockers, which prompted an article in *World Wrestling Federation Magazine* that was titled "We Don't Cheat." The article focused on:
a) the Rockers' double-teaming tactics
b) the Rockers' tendency to fight outside the ring
c) injustices that the Rockers suffered because they refused to bend the rules even a little

6. Michaels once told *World Wrestling Magazine* that he'd stopped chasing women and he was going after dogs. By that he meant:
a) that he was looking for a pet
b) that he'd had his fill of lovely ladies
c) that he was after the Intercontinental Title, then held by the British Bulldog

7. Shawn hooked up for a time with the not-always-Sensational Sherri. She referred to him as her:
a) Bad Boy
b) Big Boy
c) Sexy Boy

Questions About Shawn

By Larry Humber

8. Michaels finally got his hands on the Intercontinental Title, only to have it taken from him because:
a) he defended it too often on disqualifications
b) it was ruled he wasn't making enough title defenses to warrant keeping it
c) opponents were refusing to challenge him because of his questionable tactics

9. Shawn took on Tatanka at *WrestleMania IX* in Las Vegas. He was accompanied by a bikini-clad lady. That was:
a) Luna Vachon
b) Sherri
c) Alundra Blayze

10. Speaking of Miss Blayze, she now co-writes Shawn's Advice to the Lovelorn column in *World Wrestling Federation Magazine*. Previously, Shawn:
a) wrote under the name of Vic Venom
b) did all his talking in the ring
c) wrote the column by himself

11. It's been some time since *World Wrestling Federation Magazine* conducted a poll to determining the Federation's Sexiest Man, but the result of that poll is still open to question. Shawn:
a) easily topped the poll, despite having many detractors at the time
b) finished a surprising second to Bret "Hit Man" Hart
c) finished third to Bobby Heenan (suspicious or what?) and Hart

12. Michaels went head to head with the Hit Man and his entire family at the 1993 *Survivor Series*. Backing Shawn were:
a) Diesel, who was then his bodyguard, and a couple of no-names who have since left the Federation
b) his Red, Black and Blue Knights
c) what he dubbed his Family

13. Diesel first came to Michaels' attention:
a) when Shawn was touring Las Vegas a few years back
b) on one of the Federation's European tours
c) at a truck stop outside Los Angeles

14. One of Michaels' most intriguing matches was against Razor Ramon at *WrestleMania X*. A ladder was introduced because:
a) the Intercontinental Belt was suspended above the ring, reachable only by a ladder
b) the match was fought inside a greased cage
c) Shawn had joked that Ramon wasn't nearly the man he was

15. Shawn and Diesel parted ways after:
a) Michaels put the boots to his buddy a couple of times, claiming it was all a mistake
b) Diesel coldcocked Shawn at the 1994 *Survivor Series*
c) deciding that they had their own worlds to conquer

16. Shawn did the unexpected at the 1995 *Royal Rumble*, as he:
a) nearly won it despite being the first man in the ring
b) bailed out once he heard he'd been drawn first
c) went all the way despite being the first to enter

17. Michaels was earlier the subject of another issue of *Wrestling Spotlight*. At the time:
a) he was wrestling solo
b) he had just hooked up with Diesel
c) he was paired with Jannetty

18. Going back a bit, Shawn made his solo *WrestleMania* debut at *WrestleMania VIII*, where he effectively ended the career of:
a) Rowdy Roddy Piper
b) El Matador
c) Virgil

19. At the most recent *WrestleMania*, Shawn was accompanied by:
a) bodyguard Sid and curvy Jenny McCarthy
b) Sid and main squeeze Pam Anderson
c) Sid, Pam and Jenny

20. Shawn is now starting to win over Federation fans. He says:
a) he'll try to change his ways so as not to lose their support
b) he finds it rather amusing—almost funny
c) fans are stupider than he thought

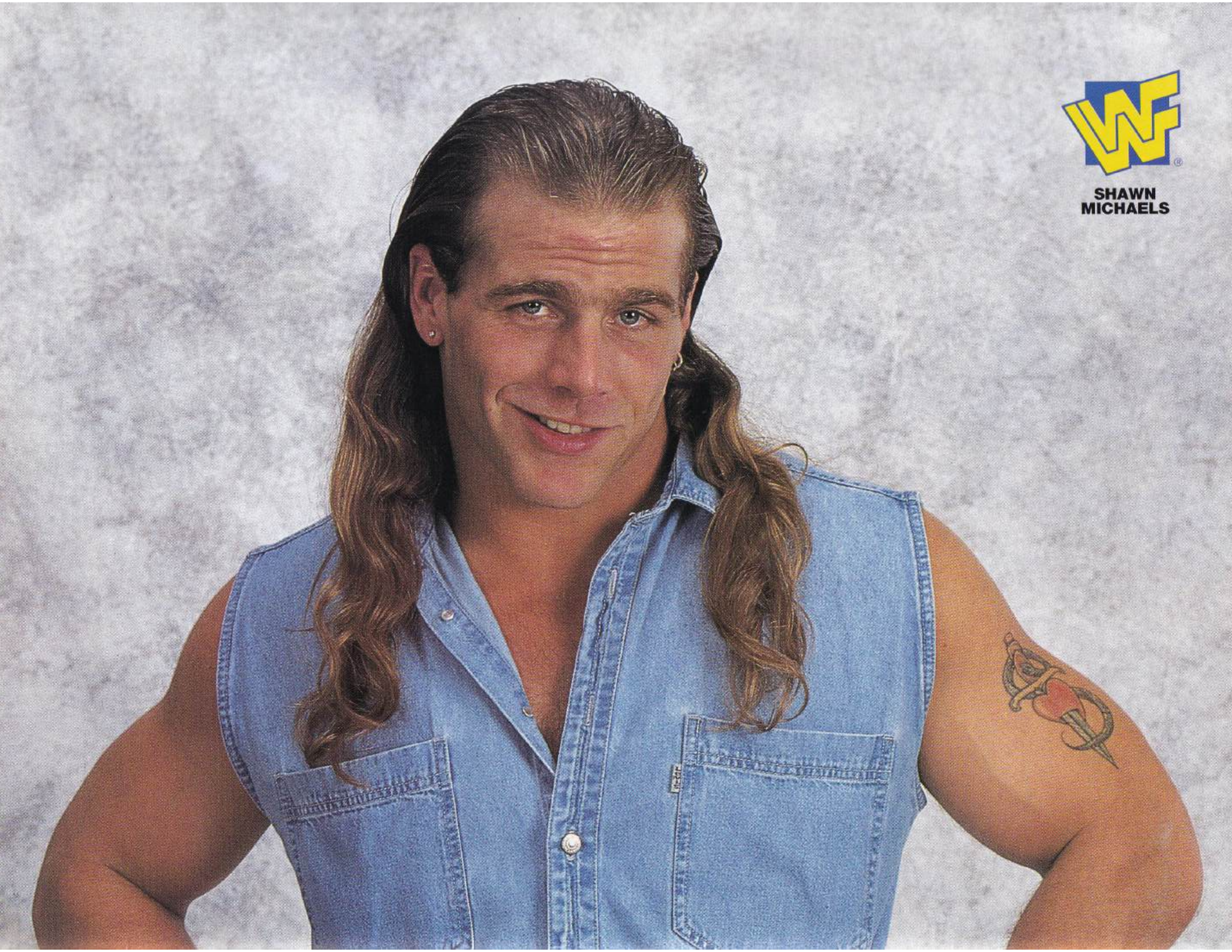
TOUGHIES

21. A former Federation manager once likened Michaels to what blond-haired British pop star?

22. Why did Shawn turn his back on former partner Marty Jannetty?

23. Shawn recently let readers of *World Wrestling Federation Magazine* in on what he considers his two secret talents. What are they?

And the answers are: 1. b), 2. c), 3. a), 4. b), 5. a), 6. c), 7. c), 8. b), 9. a), 10. c), 11. c), 12. b), 13. a), 14. a), 15. a), 16. c), 17. c), 18. b), 19. a) and 20. b).
TOUGHIES 21. David Bowie). 22. Because he figured he could rise much higher in the Federation without Jannetty, whom he called "excess baggage"). 23. Cooking and dancing).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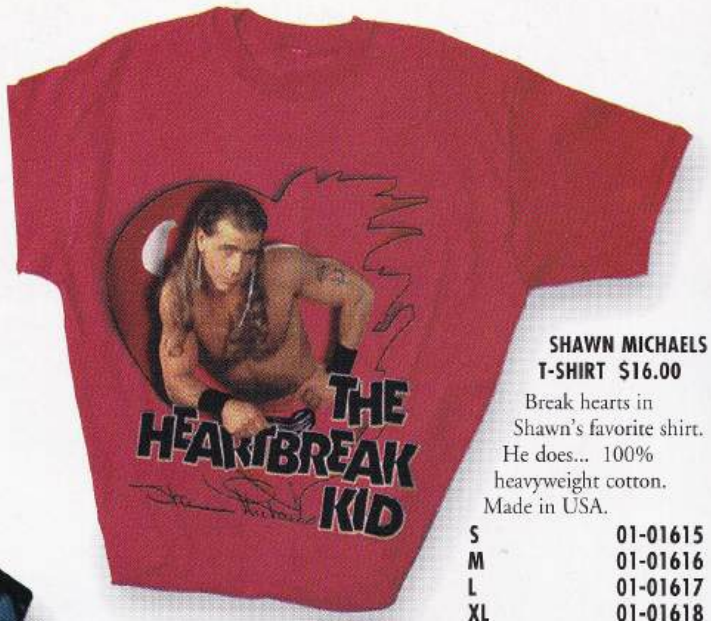

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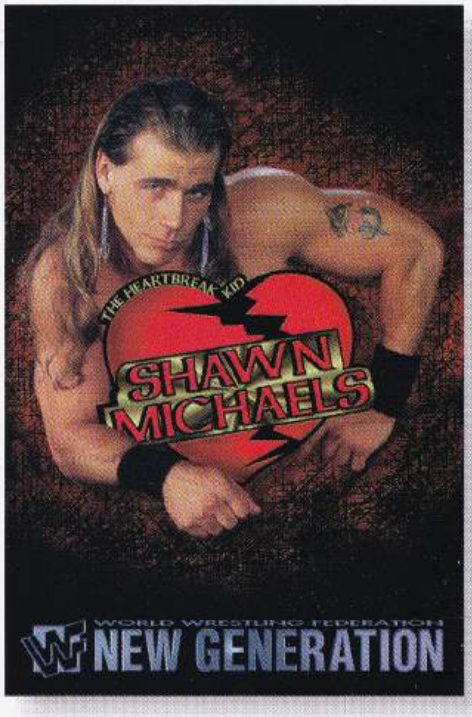

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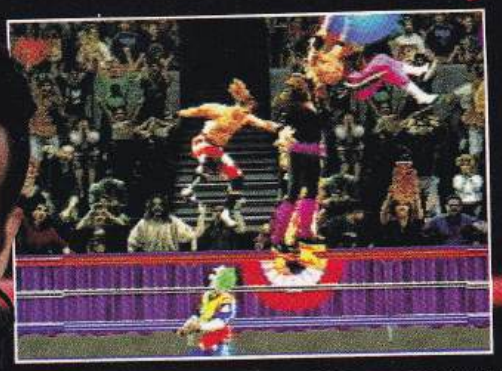

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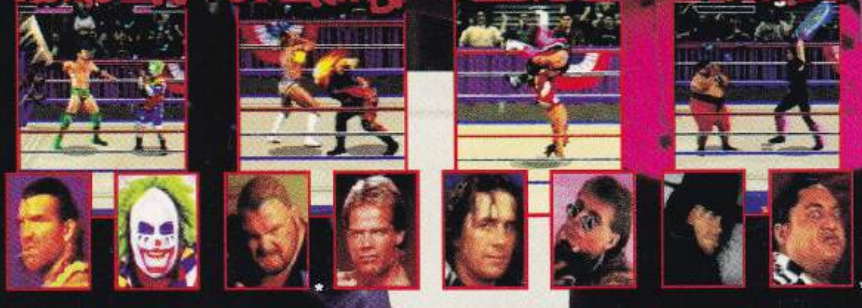

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